

Kartell

TRIBUTE TO COMPONIBILI. 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Kartell begeht feierlich den 50. Geburtstag des von Anna Castelli Ferrieri entworfenen Klassikers

Mailand, 4. April 2017

Ein zeitloser Klassiker, der seit jeher die Zukunft im Blick hat. **Die Componibili wurden vor 50 Jahren** von Anna Castelli Ferrieri entworfen und Kartell widmet diesem legendären Möbel, das sofort ein Best- und Longseller der Marke wurde, jetzt einen **besonderen Event**. Zur Feier dieses Jubiläums wurden Designer, Kuratoren und Intellektuelle aus aller Welt eingeladen, um ihren jeweils ganz persönlichen Beitrag zu leisten. Die Veranstaltung wird **im Mailänder Flagship-Store in der Via Turati stattfinden und am Dienstag, den 4. April**, anlässlich der Eröffnung des Salone del Mobile 2017 beginnen. Die Ausstellung wird bis zum 9. April zu sehen sein.

Die Ausstellung zu den Componibili zeigt die Entwicklung dieses Klassikers im Laufe der Jahrzehnte mit einer eindrucksvollen Produktpräsentation. Gezeigt werden alle Varianten in den verschiedenen Farben und Höhen durch viele Bilder, Zeichnungen aus dem Archiv und begleitende Dokumente. Im Mittelpunkt der Ausstellung, die zu einem Ausstellungsmodell wird, das auch an anderen renommierten Locations und auf internationalen Messen gezeigt werden kann – steht stets das Produkt selbst: das der Vergangenheit und das der Gegenwart.

„Der Geburtstag der Componibili von Anna Castelli Ferrieri ist eine ganz besondere Veranstaltung, denn sie zeigt die Ursprünge und Wurzeln unseres Unternehmens und stellt gleichzeitig ein absolutes Novum für die Geschichte des Designs vor“ – so Claudio Luti, Präsident von Kartell, das zu einem Klassiker des modernen Industriedesigns geworden ist – „*die Componibili sind für mich ein „Objekt“, das zur Familie gehört, sie waren schon immer Teil meiner „Wohnwelt“ und gleich als ich bei Kartell anfang, wünschte ich mir für dieses Produkt genau diese legendäre Rolle auf dem Markt und bei der internationalen Designkritik, die die Componibili in allen Museen der Welt sehen wollte.*

Mit dem „Tribute to Componibili. 50th Anniversary“ wollen wir eine authentische emotionale Erfahrung schaffen. Die Entwicklung des Produkts wird gezeigt, und wie es ihm gelang, sofort die Anforderungen der Innenarchitektur zu verstehen und dem neuen modernen Wohnstil zu entsprechen.

Im Mittelpunkt des Ausstellungsrundgangs stehen daher die fünfzehn von Künstlern gestalteten „Componibili“, die jeweils eine persönliche Sichtweise und Interpretation des Objekts repräsentieren, sie stammen von Ron Arad, Mario Bellini, Antonio Citterio, Ferruccio Laviani, Piero Lissoni, Alberto Meda, Alessandro Mendini, Nendo, Fabio Novembre, Philippe Starck, Patricia Urquiola, Tokujin Yoshioka sowie den Modehäusern Emilio Pucci und Missoni, daneben gibt es eine besondere Edition von Disney.

Die Componibili werden somit zu Kunstobjekten, Einzelstücken, die der formalen Reinheit des Originals und der kreativen Gemessenheit von Anna Castelli Ferrieri Tribut zollen.

Hinzu kommen die besonderen Widmungen der Kuratoren und Autoren, die die Einladung von Kartell angenommen haben, um die Erinnerung an dieses Objekt und seine Bedeutung zur Geltung zu bringen.

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„Alle haben sofort mit Begeisterung zugesagt“ – so Luti – „Wir haben jedem zu danken, mit einer neuen Sichtweise und Interpretation dieses Klassikers einen Beitrag für die Geschichte der Componibili und von Kartell geleistet zu haben“.

Über die Componibili

Sie hießen zunächst „Mobili 4970/84“ und haben das Design revolutioniert. Es wurde hier zum ersten Mal ein ganz neuer Projektansatz gewählt, der Design und Kunststoff verband: Ein Projekt, das bei Kartell durch die Kreativität von Anna Castelli Ferrieri möglich wurde, die den Innovationsgeist der Marke verkörpert. So wurde der Weg für die besondere Entwicklung bereitet, die während der Jahre das, was als Intuition begann, durch eine kontinuierliche Forschung im Hinblick auf Design, Technologieentwicklung und neue Materialien fortsetzte.

Die Componibili haben viele Ehrungen erhalten und Preise gewonnen, sie sind auch in der ständigen Ausstellung im MOMA in New York und im Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris zu finden.

Die Componibili repräsentierten eine ganz neue Einrichtungstypologie: Es handelt sich um die ersten kombinierbaren Modulelemente, die aus ABS hergestellt wurden, ein für die damalige Zeit neuartiges Material, das im Hinblick auf seine mechanischen und ästhetischen Eigenschaften ausgesprochen fortschrittlich ist.

Diese flexiblen, funktionalen und praktischen Möbel werden seit vierzig Jahren hergestellt und sind noch immer aktuell und modern. Sie repräsentieren einen historischen Moment, der extrem fruchtbar war, eine Epoche, in der sich viele neue ästhetische Standards und Lebensstile entwickelt haben und in dem die Zeit eine neue Dimension erhält und der Kunststoff, als Material der Zukunft, fester Bestandteil der Kultur wird.

2014 stehen die Componibili im Mittelpunkt der Kollektion Precious, die mit einem neuen Metallic-Finish ungewöhnliche Versionen der großen Kartell-Klassiker schafft. Die Componibili erfinden sich somit wieder neu und sind heute ein legendärer Klassiker mit einem großen kommerziellen Erfolg für das Unternehmen.

Über Anna Castelli Ferrieri

Anna Castelli Ferrieri (Mailand, 6. August 1920 – Mailand, 22. Juni 2006) war Architektin, Städtebauerin und Designerin, ihrer Arbeit sind viele Veröffentlichungen und Ausstellungen gewidmet.

Sie gehörte zu den ersten Frauen, die an der technischen Hochschule in Mailand, dem Politecnico, einen Hochschulabschluss in Architektur erreichten. Als pragmatische und bewusste Architektin und Designerin hatte sie viele wichtige Positionen inne (wie den Vorsitz der ADI – der italienischen Vereinigung für Industriedesign, und die Hochschullehre), sie wurde zu einer Referenz für die gesamte Welt des Designs. Von 1976 bis 1987 war sie Art-Director bei Kartell.

Derzeit werden verschiedene von Anna Castelli Ferrieri entworfene Objekte in den großen Museen der Welt ausgestellt, aber die wichtigsten befinden sich im Museo Kartell in Noviglio (im Museum des Kartell-Werks, das von ihr selbst entworfen wurde), hier befindet sich auch das Archiv mit Dokumenten, Fotos und Entwürfen.

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Tribute to Componibili. 50th anniversary

The anniversary of the Componibili by Anna Castelli Ferrieri is a very special event whose significance can be viewed from various angles. Not only does it recount the origin and roots of Kartell, but it also reminds us that this product was such a novelty in the history of design that it became an icon of industrial production.

I personally see the Componibili as a family “possession” since they have always been part of my everyday life and when I arrived in Kartell, I immediately chose to leave this product the iconic role assigned to it by the market and by the critics of international design who have honoured it in museums around the world.

With “Tribute to Componibili. 50th Anniversary” we have chosen to tell the story from an emotional viewpoint, to recount the evolution of the product and the way in which it successfully interpreted interior design and immediately encountered new tastes in contemporary living trends. To complete this experience, many of the designers who work with Kartell are presenting their own personal interpretation of the project. We have invited them to come up with some new thoughts on the topic and this has produced fifteen signature pieces, alongside dedications of a personal nature from international curators and critics. These numerous little “tributes” celebrate an anniversary that marks yet another passage in a story that continues to unfold.

Claudio Luti

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**Ron Arad, Mario Bellini, Antonio Citterio, Walt Disney, Ferruccio Laviani, Piero Lissoni, Alberto Meda, Alessandro Mendini, Angela Missoni, Nendo, Fabio Novembre, Laudomia Pucci, Philippe Starck, Patricia Urquiola, Tokujin Yoshioka for
Tribute to Componibili. 50th anniversary**

I'm not a researcher, and I'm not an historian, but I know that Anna Castelli took 'plastic' from being a dismissive description into a new field of desirable components in our lives. Isn't this the DNA of Kartell?
Ron Arad

ANNA, FIRST LADY OF DESIGN *She was the first great lady of Italian design, the one who was way ahead of all others and, unlike all others, had timeless intuitions, a nonconformist spirit and a bold attitude. No prima donna but often, in fact, the first woman: one of the first to graduate in Architecture from the Polytechnic and the first to chair ADI, from 1969 to 1971. It was actually at ADI that Anna asked me to become her vice. I accepted without hesitation even though I was not fond of titles or positions. In actual fact, it turned out to be an intense and very special experience, also because I was able to give back a little of what I had received. Indeed, ADI had honoured me in 1962 with the first of eight Golden Compasses. An Award that had bowled me over when I was still very young, opening doors and offering opportunities, one which represented a turning point in my life.*

KARTELL'S (SINCE 1967) *It may be just a coincidence but Andy Warhol transformed the graphic design of Campbell's soup tins into artworks shortly before Kartell launched the Componibili. So it is that, fifty years later, I am unable to resist the temptation: same proportions, same shape, same impact. By alternating red and white Componibili and touching them up a bit... here we have Kartell's... an authentic concentration of icons. And your "Design Soup" is now being served!*

Mario Bellini

"I have used a feature from the original design (the round finger hole handle) and have multiplied it to obtain a new graphic design which, I feel, represents me."

Antonio Citterio

"You're a genius, I'm a genius, so imagine what we can do together."

Walt Disney

Nature, usually, is the only one capable of creating perfect objects, but I do have to admit that Anna Castelli Ferrieri with her 'Componibili' has come very close to it.

Ever since mass produced objects created the 'Industrial Design', has very few objects embodied, form, function, materiality, and technology in such a way that it became an iconographic representation of the taste and style of an era.

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I am happy to pay a small, ironic tribute to this evergreen of design, stressing its green side by modifying it's function and creating a flower box.

Ferruccio Laviani

"I wanted to pay tribute to an extraordinary design by Anna Castelli Ferrieri in 1969, a design that has become an archetype and an icon of the last 50 years. Not wanting to interpret it as a designer, I tried to imagine what would have happened if I'd imitated it and played with it as an artist: I chose to be a pale imitation of Jackson Pollock, one of my favourite masters of 20th-century painting... a pale imitation in every way, from the coveralls to the gesture, perhaps not nervous enough or as resolute as the original. In reality, I tried to caress the Componibili in a gentler way, with primary colours, using the dripping technique like the original, but without the same fury or genius.

To honour this wonderful design, I tried to combine energy with energy: that of two great masters, one of design and the other of contemporary art."

Piero Lissoni

"It did not seem right for my intervention on Anna Castelli Ferrieri's Componibili to be either decorative or meddlesome. Knowing what she was like, I do not think she would have been very pleased...! I imagined using them, without detracting from their simplicity, to create a console with a glass top supported by two columns of Componibili, resulting in two structural and architectural elements."

Alberto Meda

Long live Anna Castelli!

And her evergreen "Componibili".

Alessandro Mendini

"I grew up in the 60's, constantly exposed to design and architecture

The image of Kartell Componibili is well impressed in my memory: the only piece of bedroom furniture that has followed me throughout my various changes of address, from the bedroom I had as a little girl to the one I sleep in now. It is certainly one of the first objects that shaped my taste for design."

Angela Missoni

Kartell is an Italian company that specializes in plastic contemporary furniture, including the cylindrical chest "Componibili" which is said to be one of their signature items. This has been redesigned in time of the exhibition organized to commemorate the furniture's 50th anniversary. The speciality of componibili is its simple appearance and function that fits naturally in various types of interior and its ease-of-use. Therefore, several everyday sundries in the room unsurprisingly "gather" around it. In other words, it is rarely seen on its own. Since the appearance resembles "one big family" rather than "one piece of

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furniture”, the possibility of creating an expression like a “family photo” was explored by turning the sundries that gather around into the same design as the componibili. The cups, wine bottles, and the cork that was placed on the side all have the same doors details as componibili. Additionally, books, glasses, lamps, and leaves as well as the planters have all become members of the “Componibili” family.
Nendo

ANNA *She called it “Componibile”, in keeping with her ascetic nature. It actually became an iconic design, which has now been with us for 50 years and has even been celebrated with a doodle by Google. I have to admit that I have always been under the impression that the round finger hole was meant to be a wink for those who were able to grasp Anna’s sense of irony. Having had the good fortune to be personally acquainted with her, I want to respond with an ear-to-ear smile, as befits the emoji times we live in. I think she would have liked it too.*

Fabio Novembre

“To celebrate the 50th birthday of “Componibili”, icon of contemporary design, bestseller and still very current object, Emilio Pucci is pleased to pay tribute at the Salone del Mobile with a special “Campanule” floral print edition from its archives, combining regular and modular patterns as only Emilio Pucci is able to do.”

Laudomia Pucci

« We support Good Ideas »

Philippe Starck

“Componibili is a place to keep your tangible thoughts and memories. So many of them it’s hard to close the doors on them.”

Patricia Urquiola

*Small butterflies are fluttering
and dancing around a lovely flower.
We cherish it as if it were a living flower.
It will continue to charm through the generations.*

*To commemorate the 50th anniversary,
I dedicate this piece to Anna Castelli Ferrieri.*

Tokuji Yoshioka

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Chiara Alessi, Antonella Andriani, Silvana Annicchiarico (Director, Design Museum La Triennale, Milano), Paola Antonelli (Senior Curator, Department of Architecture and Design MoMA, New York), Alberto Bassi, Arnaud Bozzini (Exhibitions Director, ADAM Art & Design Atomium Museum, Bruxelles), Valerio Castelli, Michele De Lucchi, Beppe Finessi, Marva Griffin, Fulvio Irace, Marie-Laure Jousset, Jihyun Kim (Chief Curator, D Museum, Seoul), Cristina Morozzi, Anty Pansera, Vanni Pasca, Davide Rampello, Marco Romanelli, Deyan Sudjic (Director, Design Museum, London) for Tribute to Componibili. 50th anniversary

I COM PO NI BI LI

*I Nicomlipobi sono esseri plasticosti da un'allegria grimante da una stanza all'altra
I Nilicompobi sono seresi sicoplasti da un'agrillea graminte da una zanza all'altra
I Pobinicomli sono resesi sticoplasmi da un'illagria mintegra da una stanza all'altra
I Comlipobini sono seresi sicaplosti da un'alligrea mintagre da una stanza all'altra
Da un'alligrea sticoplasmi all'altra, i Compobinili sono seresi graminte da una stanza
Agrallei da una stanza, i sicoplasti sono all'altra esseri mintagre Compolibini
I sicaplosti sono resesi grimanti da un'allegria ponibicomla da una stanza all'altra
I seresi sono Comlibinopi migranti da una stanza sicaplosti all'altra agrilla
I Nibicompoli da una stanza sono esseri mintegri da un'illegria sticoplasmi all'altra*

lvveva i Nilocompobi egrilli, resesi sicplacosti e graminti!

Chiara Alessi

A GOOD DESIGN IS FOREVER *My earliest recollections of the Componibili date back to my childhood when I was still totally unaware of the pregnant meaning of the name, the importance of this design project, which had won a Golden Compass Honourable Mention the year I was born, this lesson in rationalism, the boldness of Anna Castelli Ferrieri, the potential of plastic, the significance of colour and the meaning it was destined to have in my future career in the world of design. I approached them as I would a toy: in my eyes they were magical boxes whose enchanting gleam I could see my reflection in; they were strange drawers that opened on one side and satisfied my innate sense of nonconformity; lightweight and far removed from granny's monolithic bedside tables; round in shape with no sharp edges to threaten my clumsiness. I imagined that the little circular elements of my construction blocks had been magically enlarged to enable adults to play at putting them together and I hoped the same magic spell could make the sweet wrappings disappear when I hid them inside. Quite a few years have gone by since then and, with a greater sense of awareness, I now marvel at their quality, untouched by time.*

Antonella Andriani

"For half a century they were almost viewed as a manifesto of the rationality that went hand in hand with Italian design activity: widely affordable but also easy to pile up, stack and store, the Componibili by Anna Castelli Ferrieri turned the design dream of making the world (and our lifestyle) tidier and more habitable into the plastic of the Kartell universe. Do they still have the same effect when we look at them again today? Do they still communicate the same message? They do and they don't. They do in as much as

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the rationalist and modernist imprint underlying their concept is unquestionable. On the other hand, today it is almost impossible not to see a visionary thrust which was possibly less evident in the sixties and almost overshadowed by the diktat of functionalism. As if Anna Castelli Ferrieri – a woman in the man's world of design – had given shape with these furniture pieces (curvy, open and accommodating...) to a female sensitivity that was certainly ahead of her time and which, only now – with unprejudiced eyes – we are able to grasp in its full force and elegance, but also in all of its diversity.”

Silvana Annicchiarico

“The best examples of Italian design reflect a close-knit collaboration between designers and entrepreneurs, based on a shared knowledge of techniques and objectives of a formal and functional nature. No collaboration could have been closer (or more fruitful) than the one between Giulio Castelli, who founded Kartell in 1949 to exploit the discovery of promising new thermoplastic materials, and Anna Castelli Ferrieri, architect and art director of Kartell until 1987. They met in 1936 and got married in 1943, one year before Anna obtained her degree in architecture and six years before Giulio graduated in chemical engineering, both having studied at the Politecnico di Milano. Every Kartell product is a milestone in the history of design (without any exaggeration on my part). The most famous and ubiquitous Componibili elements which Anna Castelli Ferrieri put into production in 1967 are not only an example of elegance and synthesis, but experimentation as well. Before then, ABS had never been used in such an innovative way, its futuristic splendour contrasting with the traditional smack of a shutter door furnishing element, and its mechanical limits (an excessively large surface would have been too fragile) overcome by the modularity of the system, to create tiny Metabolist-style architectural constructions, which have left their mark on an entire generation of Italians.”

Paola Antonelli

ONE CYLINDER LEADS TO ANOTHER *It all started with Gino Colombini's waste paper bin, a polythene cylinder that was easy to produce and finish with its soldered base. Then the cylinder was cut out time and time again by Joe Colombo so that he could introduce different types of luminaires. Finally, architect and designer Anna Ferrieri adopted the cylinder shape in hardwearing ABS to create storage elements of different sizes and colours, enabling endless compositional variations, as if they were imaginary bricks for building living spaces. The design method combines the compositional touch of the architect with the democratic, standardized and serial approach of the designer, ever attentive to the management of the business, constantly working side by side with Giulio Castelli.*

These are the years in which Vico Magistretti unites a semi sphere and a complete sphere to create a lighting fixture that is both geometric and highly engaging, whose luminosity is modulated by rotating the inner sphere. Thanks to a hole positioned on the curved inner door, Ferrieri's cylinders open and close with the greatest of ease; they allow the simplest of forms to be transformed in an infinite number of ways, in terms of composition and versatility of use, enabling their mass distribution and a long product life, so much so that they are even passed down from one generation to another.

The question – with Bruno Munari – is unchanged: design is born to live in the supermarkets; the cylindrical storage elements by Kartell belong ideally and physically in supermarkets and, to tell the truth, in museums as well.

Alberto Bassi

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Opened in December 2015, the Art & Design Atomium Museum [ADAM] pays homage to plastic, that cheerful, unpretentious creative marvel of popular design. Based on a formerly private collection, today accessible to the public, the permanent exhibition showcases through more than 500 items (artworks and design pieces) the impact of plastics on design creativity from the late fifties to the present day. The 1960s marked a period of unprecedented expansion for design in which the design pieces were seen by all as the expression of a new era - relaxed, lighthearted, less constrained and less conservative. The machine age and the aesthetics of efficient functioning that characterized good design were supported by a thriving economy. In this era of mass culture, of a leisure-oriented society and of prosperity, the Componibili has found his spot and it was obvious for the curatorial to show it as an icon. In a kind of plastic utopia during the Sixties, the Componibili resonated because it translated perfectly the idea that design had finally met the democratic challenge it had promised to fulfill in the early 19th century, with the creation of items that were inexpensive and easily attainable - and plastic played a part in this success. Edited till today, the Componibili has become a master piece of post-WWII design and is an important piece of the "mass production and pop functionalism" section of our exhibition.

Arnaud Bozzini

Architects' children grow up seeing totally new objects popping up around them, and they consider this normal. All of a sudden, something brand new shows up like a birthday present, with all the joy and excitement of someone who has created something to meet an everyday need. For me, it was totally normal to grow up with Componibili in every corner of the house, especially the square ones. Mum said they were better; they were the original design. But, because of the product's success, she gave in to the hated marketing department and agreed to create a rounded version. Architects don't always agree with the market, and here too, Mum changed her version of the story and said that the round version was the original design. Anyway, whether round or square, they continue to be a part of homes around the world, to the great satisfaction of us children, who through no merit of our own continue to enjoy their success. Thanks Mum.

Valerio Castelli

Anna Castelli Ferreri's Componibili isn't just an excellent, functional, practical and long-lasting Kartell product, but an important milestone in the culture of design. I connect it above all to the "mismatched" phenomenon that introduced a new and revolutionary parameter of imagination and freedom to home furnishings. Good-bye to matching upholstery and drapes. So long paired tables and chairs. No more drapes and tablecloths with the same pattern. While this trend had already begun after World War II with design in the Fifties, it gained its full expression in the Sixties when this easy-going and creative style truly came into its own, encouraging people to create their own environment any way they want, with no formal, decorative or disciplinary rules. Like many of her other products, Anna's columns have this quality that lets them fit in anywhere and with anything. They go with antique and contemporary furniture, in modern or traditional environments, in the kitchen or lounge or bathroom or bedroom. They go anywhere. They can be tall or short, black or white or coloured or gold in the latest versions. Let your imagination run wild!

And what could be better for a designer who doesn't want to impose her own taste and style than to

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stimulate the hidden creativity in each of us? With Componibili, we're all architects and great designers!
Michele De Lucchi

Every now and then, on rare occasions, it is possible to come across projects born of the same designer which seem to communicate from different places. Devoid of any single taste or signature trait. But endowed with different possibilities that are fruit of listening, curiosity and open-mindedness. Anna Castelli Ferrieri, whose background, training and personal life choices placed her alongside the great masters of design (Franco Albini and Ignazio Gardella) and great industrialists (Giulio Castelli, the first entrepreneur in our ambit with an industrial design mindset, constantly committed to defending its spirit, that is to say, "serial production"), has always designed with unusual linguistic codes: such as those expressed by the surprising proportions of the 4810 stackable stool or the odd compromise between toy and useful object of the 4814 armchair on wheels, or the Piggy chair/footrest, which paved the way to a season of more playful communication. To culminate in a distillation of perfection: hence the Cirri fruit stand, air bubbles described in steel; hence the Hannah flatware, sculptures smoothed to such perfection as to be honoured with a Golden Compass award; hence the 4822/44 stool, brio, functionality, proportion and much more besides; hence the 4870 chair whose ribs become decorative motifs; hence the 4673 ashtray, as radiant as a flower, and that other "individual" ashtray, the 4639, similar to an everyday "ammunition" loader. Almost all of these stories were written for Kartell, the family creature and her test bench on which to demonstrate her savoir-faire, ever successful in reaching her main interlocutor, her public, and shying away from furniture destined to last no longer than a season but, on the contrary, ever committed to creating timeless objects. Successful in her intent, as with this Componibile, one of her first pieces of design, which has passed through various periods unscathed, ready to face the future, as bright and fluid as ever.

Beppe Finessi

"Before getting to know Anna, I lived with Kartell's Componibili in my own home. Then... what an immense pleasure it was to meet her along with Giulio".

Marva Griffin

The first was red (in actual fact it was probably the only one because its resistance passed the test of time). On castors. Ideal for pushing around with one finger or, better still, with a toe.

It was 1974: I was about to graduate in architecture and this gift was a kind of "good luck" omen in anticipation of a successful career that had yet to begin.

These were years of constant euphoria that subsequent events were about to weigh down with lead, but which still fired the imagination on the thresholds of power.

The Archigram movement was on the crest of the wave with its mobile architectural structures in immobile city spaces and Stanley Kubrick had just photographed the vision of a suspended, fluctuating and ever-changing living culture in his "2001: A Space Odyssey".

The storage elements by Anna Castelli Ferrieri had grasped this fleeting moment, encapsulating it in a plastic mould: as if by magic, furniture on legs disappeared and the containers (for pens, rapidographs,

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cartridges, screens and all the paraphernalia that used to be the draughtsman's tools) were turned into docile servants following us around like the robots in "star wars".

In my eyes, they still represent the early days of design's second modernity: an optimistic (ingenuous?) golden age of the machine civilization: the fortunate simplicity of an idea which, like Columbus's egg, laughingly swept away all the useless stuffiness of professional furnishings. In brief, a game for adult children: pieces of Lego that even an aspiring architect could play with.

Fulvio Irace

Anna, the warrior, is a pioneer in the male-dominated world of Milanese design!

She belongs to that generation that believes in the social role of design and that designs fair, honest and useful objects that are modest and effective friends. The proof? Her creation of Componibili in 1967 was such an intelligent and rational response to the needs of daily life that they're still included in Kartell's catalogue!

Marie-Laure Jousset

Componibili (1967), designed by Anna Castelli, is an essential milestone in contemporary furniture. Its open and modular form, not confined to a narrowly defined function, invites to multiple uses. Meeting the needs of people, allows them to create their own unique stories from everyday home life. With Componibili, Kartell significantly, and influentially, repositioned the concept of furniture for people.

Jihyun Kim

In the book I wrote in 1993 about "Anna Castelli Ferrieri" (I designer, Editori Laterza), there is a quote taken from the volume "Plastiche e design- Anna Castelli Ferrieri", written by Augusto Morello for Arcadia edizioni in 1984, with regard to the Componibili, which still seems extremely apt to me, or should I say "prophetic", since it refers to the so-called "mettitutto", a traditional all-purpose piece of furniture that keeps cropping up again and again.

"The greatest boast of these cupboards is that they were the forerunners of a new typology, one which became a leitmotiv of the seventies. The idea was prompted by two main factors, the new stimulating opportunities offered by technology and the need, not yet expressed but already in the air, for more flexible and informal furnishing elements that could respond more effectively to the radical lifestyle changes spreading through society, particularly among young people in the mid seventies. One element: a chair; two elements: a bedside table; three elements: a bookcase; four, five elements: a tower for storing practically anything."

Cristina Morozzi

"THANK YOU ANNA!" *A meeting in Ferrara, back in 2001: Lola Bonora (video artist ever engaged in experimental art, music and theatre... in the name of innovation and creativity) asked me to curate the X Biennale Donna which UDI (Italian Women's Union) had been putting on since 1984. This edition set out to highlight designers. My heart sank: I have never been a feminist and the request found me*

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unprepared. For over twenty years, I had carried out studies and research in the variegated ambit of design culture but had never addressed "gender" topics/issues.

I took time to think about it... and returned to Milan.

Three phone calls: to Gae Aulenti ("unfeasible idea"), to Cini Boeri (more receptive) and Anna. "Go on! You must do it...": encouragement all the way. And, at the inauguration of "Dal merletto alla motocicletta", at Palazzo dei Diamanti, on 3 March 2002, there was Anna, who arrived before the actual opening in the company of Manuela Ciffarelli...

From then onwards, I started to focus on women's contribution to design: and in 2008, in Turin, in the exhibition titled "La mano, la mente, il cuore", there was actually a monographic section dedicated to Anna Ferrieri Castelli: the Componibili, which have now been with us for half a century, are just one of the icons carrying her signature.

Anty Pansera

It has been said that the industrial designer "domesticates new technology and makes it available for human use". This is exactly what Anna Castelli Ferrieri has done, with the gravitas and the intense intellectual effort for which she has always been known.

Vanni Pasca

Remembering (ricordare in Italian) is tantamount to transferring our past to the present. The root cordis of the Italian verb tells us that it is through our heart that we give a shape and voice to images, to feelings that the passing days and years have pushed to the back of our minds...

I still seem to be able to smell the slightly sweet and lingering scent of Chesterfields without filter: Anna at the Triennale, accompanied by Giulio. I am unable to conjure up an image of Anna without Giulio.

The fact that she smoked was not only a sign of emancipation in the women of her generation, but coincided and revealed the pace of her vivaciousness, her creativeness...

I have a precise recollection of the times we met, which were not frequent. Whenever I stopped to greet her, I had the sensation of approaching a somewhat brusque personality but I was always belied by the sweetest of smiles.

Davide Rampello

Kartell

TRIBUTE TO COMPONIBILI. 50TH ANNIVERSARY

4970: A PROJECT THAT DEFIES DEFINITION AND, THEREFORE, TIME ITSELF! *“When a product is of an entirely new typology - said Anna Castelli at the time – it is even difficult to name it: we have called them Componibili, but in actual fact, they are simply Sovrapponibili (Stackable)”.*

The first product designed by Anna Castelli Ferrieri for Kartell is a masterpiece of technology and creative flair. Square or round based, enclosed by sliding doors and fitted with internal shelves, these little furniture accessories (available in red, black or white at the time) rewrote the rules of formal design and, in terms of function, provided a perfect and ineluctable solution.

Bedside tables? Bathroom cabinets? Office storage units? Who cares! Simply irreplaceable, down through the years they have been teamed up with pop and post-modern furnishings, or used in baroque and minimal-style interiors. Finally, they have become retro while continuing to be contemporary: hands up those who do not already own, or have not had at one time or another a “4970” in their homes?

Marco Romanelli

It is a privilege to have been able to meet Anna Castelli Ferrieri, one of the designers who made Italy the most vibrant and inventive centre for contemporary design in the 1960s. To have done so is to be reminded that such apparently effortless and timeless pieces as the Componibili have their roots in the creative mind of an individual. The Componibili range was based on putting a new technology and an unfamiliar material to work in practical ways in the domestic setting. Anna Castelli Ferrieri brought all her designs the sense of elegant innovation, sensitive to the needs of the user that reflected her own personality. She set a remarkable standard that has served to define Kartell ever since.

Deyan Sudjic