

“ THE STUDIO MAGAZINE ”

The HP Le Studio Gallery Newsletter

hplestudio.com

Issue #1



Photo Hervé Lewandowsky all rights reserved
Ettore Zaccari and workshop: a unique set of ebonized and carved studio furniture comprising a desk adorned with a sculpted panel by Ettore Zaccari, four chairs and an occasional round table, Italy, circa 1923

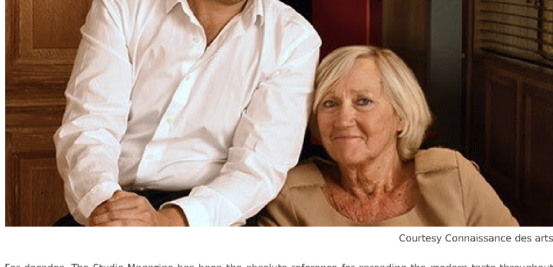
Editor's foreword

Elisabeth Hervé & Marc-Antoine Patissier

The 24th edition of PAD is coming soon.

During those two years of pandemic we have missed you a lot, and we are indeed very pleased to be part of this marvelous Fair in the coming month of April, as we have been since 1998. Again, we will be able to show our findings, to meet you in person and to share with you the pleasure of a direct contact with objects and pieces of furniture.

Also, we are happy to introduce a novelty under the form of the present newsletter. We see it as one more window opened into our world: modern European decorative arts and architects' furniture from 1851 till the first years of post-modernism, in the 80's.



Courtesy Connaissance des arts

For decades, The Studio Magazine has been the absolute reference for spreading the modern taste throughout Europe. As a tribute to this seminal publication in French and in English, we named our gallery "HP Le Studio", in 1990. And as a further homage to this glorious publication, we would like to modestly but proudly introduce our own "The Studio Magazine". In this review, you will enjoy a sneak peek of our new acquisitions, as well as art history essays, archives and a forecast of our upcoming events.

We hope you will enjoy it as much as we are pleased to edit it.

The situation of decorative arts in Italy from 1902 to 1925

Marc-Antoine Patissier

The Liberty season

The 1900 Paris Universal Exhibition saw the triumph of Art Nouveau, and made it widely popular all over Europe. Two years later, Italy organized the International Exhibition of Turin, which proved a big success. But this Italian version of Art Nouveau, called « Stile floreale » or « Stile Liberty », inspired by the British, Austrian, and German modern styles, was not really accepted by a large part of Italian artists and critics, even if many outstanding buildings and pieces of decorative arts were produced at that time (mostly in the North and in the Mezzogiorno, especially in Palermo, Sicily). Sadly enough, this young nation (1860) did not consider Liberty as an Italian movement. Suspected of being too cosmopolitan or too German, it was quickly labeled as a foreign fashionable style, unable to represent Italian national genius - whatever that could mean to anyone, except the old fanatics of handmade carvings, firmly sticking to their famous Italian "Glorioso Passato". This misunderstanding swept away the Liberty season, and made Italy fail to join modernity.

Futurism

The first Futurism was another misunderstanding. Born around 1910, and reborn as second Futurism after the war, it was considered the first genuinely Italian manifestation of avant-garde. But this early, playful, confidential experiment never reached the Italian public in its time. Nevertheless the second Futurism in the 20's had a very strong influence for the penetration of the modern spirit in twentieth century Italy. Its reverence for speed and machines, its connections with the Dada movement, have been an inspiration for the next generations, particularly for the rationalists in the early 30's, and for the radical experiments of the 60's and 70's. For most Italian decorative arts historians of the 80's, obsessed with avant-garde, Futurism was the absolute reference, and still is nowadays the only but fragile proof of early Italian involvement in the European modernist revolution.

Art Deco's first steps

Yearning for an authentic Italian modern art, frustrated by the Peace of Versailles, allergic to all foreign influences, some of the most talented craftsmen and artists followed their own path, made of exceptional craftsmanship, likely to preserve the Italian ability for wood carving and engraving, and their virtuosity for wrought iron and textiles. Drawing their inspiration from the vernacular traditions of their provinces, from a reinterpretation of Roman-Byzantine, early medieval and late Roman patterns, mixing them with some Liberty references - and even sometimes with japonism, antique German figures, and ideas taken from European Art Nouveau and pre-war French Art Deco (in spite of their exacerbated nationalism) - they were convinced that escaping from the historical French and English "degenerate" dominant styles was the best way to avoid any stylistic pollution.

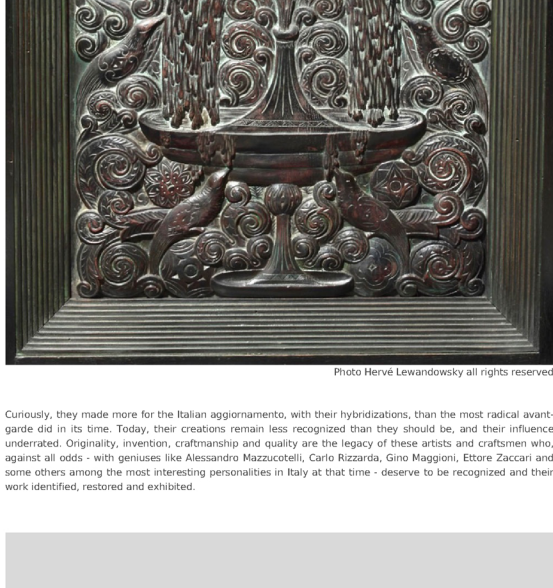


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Curiously, they made more for the Italian aggiornamento, with their hybridizations, than the most radical avant-garde did in its time. Today, their creations remain less recognized than they should be, and their influence underrated. Originality, invention, craftsmanship and quality are the legacy of these artists and craftsmen who, against all odds - with geniuses like Alessandro Mazzucotelli, Carlo Razzarò, Gino Maggioni, Ettore Zaccari and some others among the most interesting personalities in Italy at that time - deserve to be recognized and their work identified, restored and exhibited.



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The case of Ettore Zaccari (1877-1922), sculptor, ornemaniste and decorator

Marc-Antoine Patissier

Trained in his city of Milan (Lombardy), a student at the Brera Academy, Ettore Zaccari is one of the most original artist and protagonist of the Italian decorative arts «rinascimento» in the first quarter of the twentieth century. His manner, inspired by the folk patterns of his beloved Lombardy, and made from a masterly mix of Byzantine, Roman-Germanic and Renaissance elements, even in a way, close to the inspirations of Albert Rateau, was served by an outstanding talent for wood sculpture and for composition. The perfect way through which he could preserve traditional craftsmanship and satisfy his friends' and clients' needs for fresh air, in a very conservative, academic environment.



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Around 1910, he realized, mostly for artists and collectors, some very important pieces of sculpted furniture, but he died too early to see his work recognized. In 1923, he won a posthumous Prize of Honor at the first Monza Biennale, and his workshop continued to use his panels and designs for the 1925 and 1927 editions of that Biennale which became the Milan Triennale, in 1930.

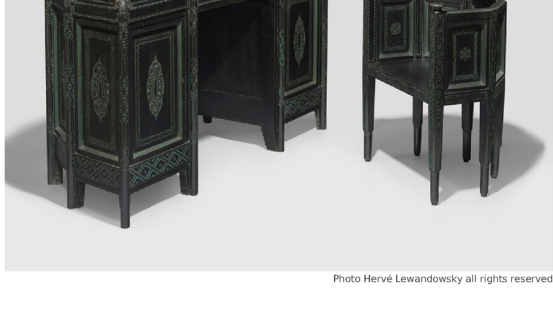


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His work is quite impossible to find: a throne by him is conserved in the Wolfson Collection and few of his best pieces are in private collections or lost. Settled in the 30's in Yugoslavia, the workshop disappeared with the lack of carved panels and designs by the Master, but then was no more the time for sculptors: it was the time for unadorned modernism. In this new era, ornament became a crime.

Next Newsletter: April 4th

SAVE THE DATE
5-10 AVRIL
TUILERIES PARIS

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