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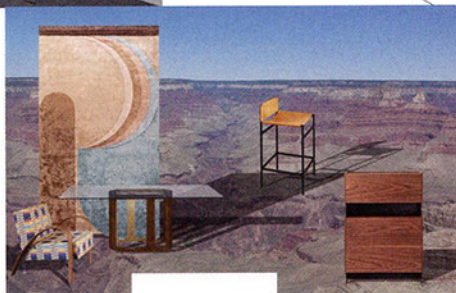
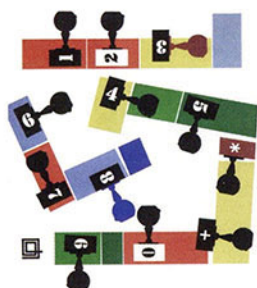
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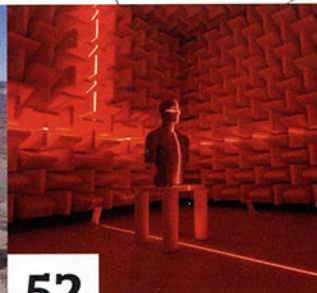
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DESIGN BLEND

The **Circle of Harmony** is the project that brings together the new collections of upholstered furniture and other furnishings by **Natuzzi Italia**.

The leitmotifs are innovative design and fine craftsmanship, contamination and the genius loci. As well as a **Mediterranean spirit**

by Patrizia Catalano

*The group that has worked with **Natuzzi Italia** to create "The Circle of Harmony." In the lower row, from left: Fabio Novembre, Paola Navone, Nika Zupanc, Maurizio Manzoni. In the upper row, from left: Marcantonio, Claudio Bellini, Pasquale Junior Natuzzi, **Mauro Lipparini**, Borre Akkersdijk. Photo by Alberto Zanetti*

The interview with Pasquale Junior Natuzzi was scheduled for Friday 20 November (2020). The day when PJ, as everyone calls the scion of the well-known sofa brand from Santeramo in Colle, was celebrating his 30th birthday. He began working in the family business at a very young age, and today we can safely say that Pasquale Junior Natuzzi, presently Chief Creative Officer and Regional Manager for Emerging Markets, is one of the most brilliant entrepreneurial 'heads' in this sector. Because he has a lively, curious mindset, with a taste for research, internationalism and versatility. PJ has brought a breath of fresh air into one of the most important furniture companies, and we believe he will continue to evolve, taking his creative vision not only into the factory, but also outside, in the world. Starting from FederlegnoArredo, where he is in charge of the task force on sustainability, as well as serving on the board of directors of Assoarredo.

Getting back to his activities in the company, Natuzzi Jr. has implemented a very ambitious project, starting with its name: The Circle of Harmony. "Harmony," he says, "is the minimum common denominator of the concept. It is a philosophy that has prompted me to find harmony in differences: putting together a 'circle' of different creative talents. I wanted to

The Sleeping Argo chaise longue from the Argo collection, designed by Paola Navone, moves sinuously to adapt to different relaxing positions, thanks to advanced electrical mechanisms activated with touch controls.



New Classic, by Fabio Novembre, offers a contemporary take on the Chesterfield sofa. It features an upholstered roll bordering the upper part, creating the armrests and the back; the squared minimal seats terminate in a surrounding floor element, enhanced at the sides by metal tubing.



Infinito, designed by Marcantonio, has a structure in metal tubin that permits the sofa to take on the form of the infinity sign. Padding in variable-density elastic polyurethane wraps the structure, creating an effect of softness and support. The skidproof feet permit Infinito to remain stable in space, without altering its sculptural image.

themselves, starting with Paola Navone who has designed Argo, an upholstered furniture system that is very soft and comfortable. She explains: "With Argo I wanted to create a family of seats, a sofa, an armchair and a chaise longue, with an inviting, soft image and an unexpected detail: a bow on the backs, as a seductive feature. The collection, enhanced by its textile coverings designed by Byborre, narrates the Mediterranean lifestyle, which does not exist anywhere else in the world". Mediterranean culture also conveys rigor and elegance, as seen in New Classic by Fabio Novembre. Why did Novembre, known as a rather transgressive designer, decide to move towards an image of formal elegance? "Design," he says, "sets out to give form to ideas. To speak of classicism in a historical moment of great eclecticism like this one means, in my view, linking back to the DNA and the historical memory of a company. Natuzzi is a firm that has never been associated with passing fashions, and has always taken an almost reassuring attitude in relation to its clients. One of the oldest archetypes in the history of upholstered furniture is the Chesterfield sofa;

my idea of 'New Classic' is the reinterpretation of that model, stripping it of its costly capitonné work and bring out the separate volumes with different coverings". The collection with the widest range of products is Deep by Nika Zupanc. "The source of inspiration in my work with Natuzzi" Zupanc says, "was the Adriatic Sea. I made an instinctive, almost primordial decision, observing the forms of water in their constant evolution: the collection is here to give comfort to your soul, like the deepens and vastness of the oceans, but also like that always present, never changing, reassuring, calming and eternal home feel of the Adriatic sea, that we all know very well. The shapes of water are interpreted through number of continuous curves and circles, that eclectically change and flow through all the presented objects. Circle is the geometrical essence of the collection and as such represents the circle of love, harmony and balance".

The Ombra table is part of the Solar collection designed by Claudio Bellini. The asymmetrical support leg is in curved wood, coated with a particular bio-mortar; the top has a tobacco finish in ash wood, while the base on the floor, simulating its reflection, is in satin-finish metal.

The 'circle' also includes a surprising designer like Marcantonio, who presents Infinito, namely an unusual way to think about the sofa. A sign, a soft sculpture with a Mediterranean soul. "As a



The Tide bookcase from the Deep collection, designed by Nina Zupanc: the shelves follow the wavy movement, like that of the tides, creating a sinuous effect. The modules come in two sizes, and allow for the creation of countless compositions.

create a blend that would mark a new direction for the company, with figures who are very different from one another: **Mauro Lipparini** and Claudio Bellini are the witnesses of a generational passage, Fabio Novembre is an old friend with whom we have finally decided to begin a story, Nika Zupanc is a creator apparently distant from the rather masculine image of Natuzzi, which is why I wanted her on the team. Maurizio Manzoni represents a wager in the direction of the contract market, while Marcantonio has proposed an unconventional project, and Paola Navone is a mentor in terms of life as well as style. Finally Byborre, representing a new level of innovation in textile design. The stories have been formulated in many hours of work and discussion, but also through convivial situations, shared moments of life. I believe Natuzzi has a lot to communicate, because we have 60 years of history and we are linked to a territory, Apulia, that is rich in traditions and beauty, which are inside our DNA. Hospitality and the culture of the Mediterranean are inside us." These were the stimuli for the designers





Oblò by Maurizio Manzoni is a modular system that offers countless configuration options for the most contemporary domestic settings, as well as classic contexts and contract applications. In the photo, the corner version covered in gray leather, with black metal feet.

creative person, I like to search for different ways of thinking about things. Since the infinity symbol is very beautiful, meaningful, pure and well-known, the idea of transforming it into a comfortable sofa immediately seemed interesting. I have tried to make this form fluid, flowing, a soft sculpture the slides on itself. It can also be something else – I seen a form that offers the possibility of discovering how it will be experienced, with the central part reclining, for example, to become a chaise longue. I start to imagine that this Infinito can begin to flow, transporting those who are lying on it, from the seat to the back, or in a sinuous repetition that lasts as long as the desire to be comforted and cradled".

Thinking about the home of the near future has been the focus of **Mauro Lipparini** with Buddy. "Buddy is the result of a sum of information of crossed data", he says "from the intuition of new scenarios to the insertion in the Natuzzi production system. Buddy is a nonchalant model, with asymmetrical architecture, empathic in its aesthetic expression. The fluidity of the cheerful gesture has helped to find a soft, gentle, friendly design for the youthful forms. Buddy interprets the reality of the present, looking towards the home of the near future, where measurable and perceived space will be fluid, less rigorous. The home in the years to come will be a 'multitasking' habitat, efficient and sufficient in terms of spaces, with as little wasted space as possible; a multi-setting, not standardized, enveloping and

engaging. An imperfect, perfectible, inspirational home".

The title chosen for the sofa designed by Maurizio Manzoni is quite emblematic: it is called Oblò (porthole). "The idea of creating a set of very comfortable seats", Manzoni explains, "forms the basis of this project, whose concept lies in the typical convivial attitudes of Mediterranean culture. Oblò comes from an analysis of concepts expressed in the 1970s and 1980s, when there were many cases of sofas with ample volumes, in which the softness was emphasized through the compression of external structures, or textile interventions conceptually extrapolated from tailoring, such as half belts. Likewise, here the soft forms are embraced by metal tubing that creates compressions to underline visual and tactile softness: an intentionally casual and appealing look".

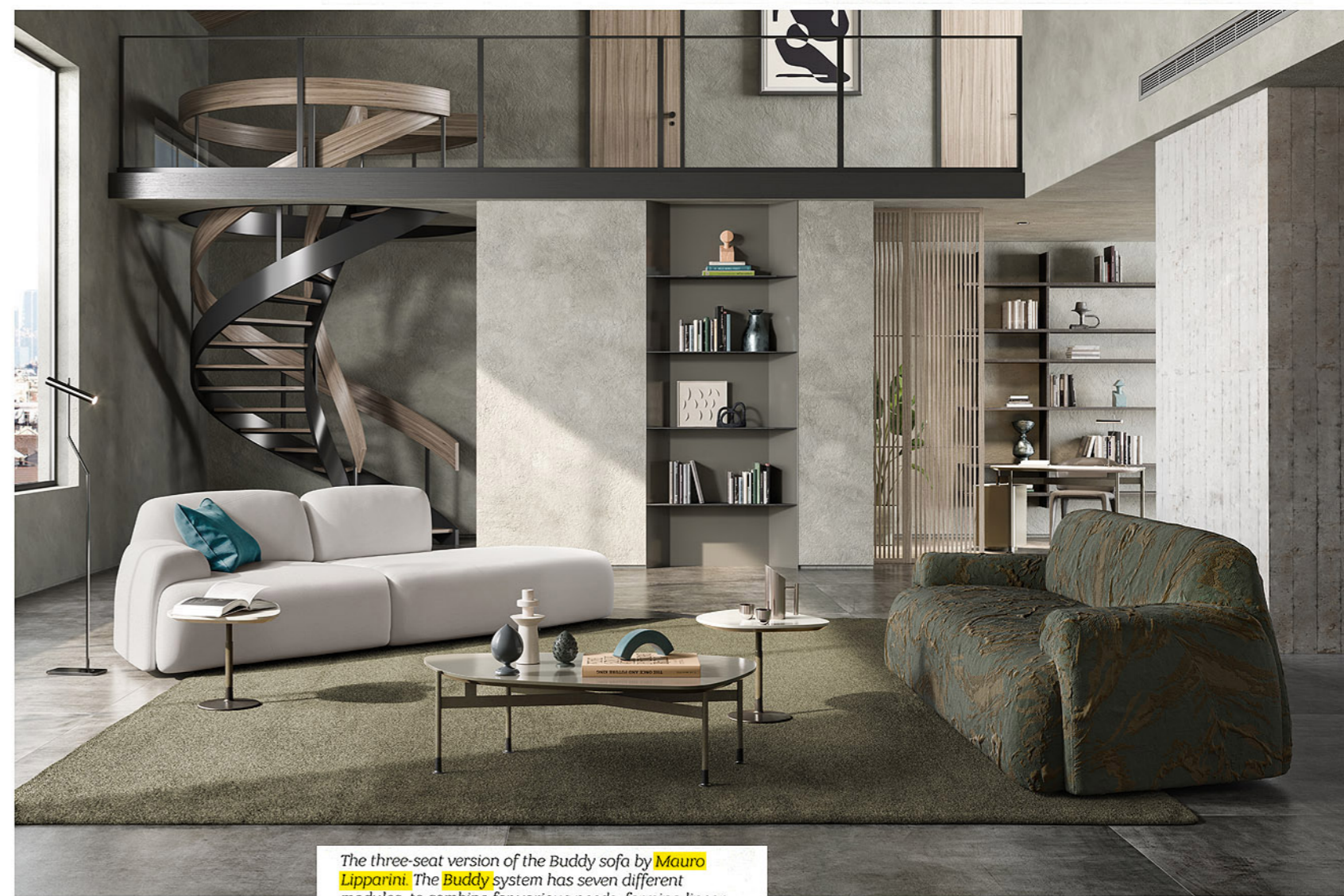
In the Circle of Harmony, there are also those who have worked on styling of great symbolic value. This is the case of Solar by Claudio Bellini, which seems to envision a home with authoritative, monolithic design, and above all forms without sharp angles. "The Ombra dining table, part of the Solar collection, is a pure, clear idea composed of a few parts. It has a monolithic base, which together with a suspended top expresses the primordial force and energy of the land in Apulia. I do not believe that the contemporary home or that of the near future will abolish corners, but its spaces and furnishings will necessarily evolve, reinterpreting forms,

contents and values, in keeping with altered lifestyles and new ways of dwelling".

To close the circle, an innovative figure for Natuzzi, a company that has always been identified with leather, is the Dutch textile innovation studio Byborre.

"Byborre believes in a radical approach to textiles", says Borre Akkersdijk, CEO and co-founder of the studio, "an opportunity to move forward in a different way. By thinking about the future of people and the planet, Byborre is finding new ways to create quality, custom, and sustainable fabrics. The DNA of Natuzzi Italia lies within the landscape of Apulia, a region famous for cascading groves of olive trees, limestone houses, and crashing waves. The Water collection of fabrics developed for Natuzzi Italia embodies that connection to the sea, with the artwork embodying the continuous movement of the ocean's water". ■

The Water collection of fabrics designed by Byborre for Natuzzi Italia is based on the movement of the sea. The fabric is made with yarns that combine wool of the highest quality with recycled PES, and comes in five color variants.



*The three-seat version of the Buddy sofa by **Mauro Lipparini**. The Buddy system has seven different modules, to combine for various needs, forming linear and corner sofas, relaxation islands, symmetrical and asymmetrical compositions.*