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A Relic of Italy's Cinzano Family's History

*An 1895 gilded clock, given to furniture designer
Enrico Marone Cinzano by his grandfather*

By Heidi Mitchell



Furniture designer Enrico Marone Cinzano in a room at his house in Bolgheri, Italy. Beside him sits the Musy Padre & Figlio clock that his great-great grandfather gave to his great-great-grandmother in 1895.

PHOTO: CLAUDIA GORI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Furniture designer Enrico Marone Cinzano has roots that run deep in Italian business. He is a descendant of an old Italian textile company family on his mother's side, and a scion of the Cinzano liquor company family on his father's side. His father's family business was one of the first to incorporate in Italy, in 1757, and Cinzano arguably remains one of the best-recognized brands in Italy today.

"My father had a very strong work ethic and expected his children to succeed, while my mother's side was more driven by arts and aesthetics, and gave me an understanding of quality and making things that last," says Mr. Marone Cinzano, whose upcycled, one-of-a-kind furnishings are sold online at pamono.com, a specialty design site, and at art galleries, such as Pearl Lam in China and Spazio Rossana Orlandi in Milan. His first solo show will be mounted in March in Hong Kong.



Mr. Marone Cinzano handling the Musy Padre & Figlio clock, which was given to him by his grandfather, Count Enrico Eugenio Marone Cinzano.

PHOTO: CLAUDIA GORI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Mr. Marone Cinzano, a graduate of Babson College, in Massachusetts, has had previous careers, including in banking, real-estate development and fashion design. The 52-year-old amassed a wealth of objects he keeps in his homes in New York and Europe. Among these is the Musy Padre & Figlio clock given by his great-great grandfather Cinzano to his great-great grandmother Marone on the event of his grandfather's baptism, 120 years ago. The clock best represents what Mr. Marone Cinzano says is one of his objectives as a designer: to remind people that beautifully crafted, luxurious essentials can be used forever.

“The clock was something that I always noticed when I stayed with my grandparents as a kid, maybe because it is shiny and has little animals on it,” said Mr. Marone Cinzano, a native of Turin, Italy. He remembers thinking it was pretty with a purpose, and that it told a personal story about his lineage. He recalls as a small boy sneaking the clock into his bedroom at night and listening to it tick, before secretly placing it back on its shelf in the living room by dawn.



*The gilded Musy Padre & Figlio clock is hand carved and has little feet for balance.
PHOTO:CLAUDIA GORI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*



*The internal mechanism of the 120-year-old clock is visible on its back.
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These days, the clock, given to him by his grandfather, lives in Mr. Marone Cinzano's bedroom in his home in Tuscany. He says he treasures the timepiece for its provenance and its maker's history—the Turin-based Musy Gioielli dates back to 1707 and created a famed tiara for the first queen of a united Italy, Margherita of Savoy. The clock also is a reminder of his purpose as a designer: “It’s both beautiful and functional,” he adds.

Mr. Marone Cinzano employs many recycled materials, including metal, fabric and wood, in creating his designs. “In Italy, we have a term, ‘usa e getta’—use and throw away—and it’s just not cool,” he says. “I think that collectively, we are not materialistic enough. We don’t value materials enough.”

His pieces, including museum-quality coffee tables, lamps, sofas and cabinets, can range in price from around \$9,500 to \$75,000 or more. “My furniture looks everything but sustainable,” he says. “I hope it educates people about what sustainability can mean.”

He likes to think that his angular designs will be used and passed down for generations, just like his great-great-grandmother’s clock. “If you own something and continually use it for a century, that adds another layer of value to it, another reason to respect it,” he says.



On the bottom of the clock is an inscription in Italian that reads, 'Enrico Cinzano ad Eugenia Marone, per il battesimo di Enrico, 15 Marzo 1895.'
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