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21 Brilliant Moments From the Milan Furniture Fair

By Wendy Goodman



I kicked off my Milan design bonanza with a visit to fashion designer [Stephan Janson](#)'s showroom where he had an exhibition of lamps by artist [Orsina Sforza](#) made from repurposed materials, including candy-paper holders.



Janson is a bit of a magician and sorcerer. He has a collection of over 300 butterflies in the foyer of his showroom. Every single room he inhabits is enchanted.



A visit to cafe-slash-shop-slash-gallery [Spazio Rossana Orlandi](#) is a must to get your blood racing. Piet Hein Eek and Enrico Marone Cinzano were some of the designers that showed at the former tie factory.



I took a Vivian Maier–esque photo of [Enrico Marone](#)'s Armadillo console.



I found myself sitting next to superstar fashion designer [Shayne Oliver, of Hood by Air](#), at a dinner celebrating the opening of the new [Roman and Williams](#)-designed restaurant [the Stage](#). I fell for Shayne, and his cuff, which I had to photograph.



The *Wallpaper** Handmade exhibition featured one-off designs that included Roman and Williams's exquisite Eater credenza, made of mahogany, with drawers lined in black leather.



Patricia Urquiola's Shimmer tables stopped me in my tracks at the [Glas](#) booth. Transparency continues in poetic new ways.



B&B Italia, FLOS, MOOOI, Kartell, and [Roche Bobois](#), pictured here, are among the many large companies that roll out incredible installations. The color of that wonderful ATMOS green velvet sofa is so rich and so new-feeling.



Once one leaves the Rho Milan Fairgrounds, there's a world of off-site exhibitions and installations to explore. I met up with British designer [Lee Broom](#), pictured here, who gave me a tour of his department-store installation in three abandoned retail spaces that he completely redid to showcase his new furniture and accessory designs.



I loved Lee Broom's chaise and wall light.



One of the biggest treats of the week was visiting [Airbnb](#)'s collaboration with [Fabrica](#): an interactive experience called HOUSEWARMING, set in the magnificent Palazzo Crespi! We couldn't take any photographs inside, but I thought this would give some sense of the architecture and the heavenly scent of wisteria the minute you entered the courtyard leading into the garden.



You can find beautiful hand-painted plates in the charming studio, [Laboratorio Paravicini](#), where Costanza Paravacini and her daughter, Benedetta Medici (who designed the plate shown here), create and sell their designs.



Tyler Hays opened his first [BDDW](#) shop in Milan and it was hard to tear myself away without breaking the bank.



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Back at the Rho Fairgrounds, [Moroso](#) had everyone buzzing and trying out amazing new pieces including Ron Arad's Matrizia sofa that looks like a flying mattress.



Entering the Barrisol booth and standing beneath Castiglioni and Lovegrove's suspended lighting felt surreal.



Alex Mustonen and Daniel Arsham of [SNARKITECTURE](#) never fail to amaze and the installation they did for COS was beyond. Is walking through this what heaven is like? Check out their [YouTube film](#) by Andrew Telling.



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The Kartell booth was enormous and filled with treasures — and people. It was packed when I was there; you could hardly see the divine Piero Lissoni “Largo” patterned sectional. Kartell presented specially designed pieces by Ettore Sottsass, “Kartell goes Sottsass: A Tribute to Memphis,” that will be installed in the New York store throughout Design Week, starting May 8.



One of the most magical experiences during the fair was entering the wonder world of architect [Massimiliano Locatelli](#)'s showroom and office housed inside a 16th-century church. Here he presented a new line of tables and tabletops in a setting that defied the imagination.



At Ventura Lambrate, the “Norwegian Presence” exhibit showcased Norwegian designers including Andreas Engesvik and his beautiful glass jars.



It seemed that [Flexform](#) had the most jam-packed booth of all — it was nearly impossible to see any of the wonderful new furniture designs until you were on top of them. There wasn't a sofa or chair I didn't want to sink right into, including this “Zeus” sofa in rosy red.



Moovi launched a new collection of rugs and they are all unbelievably imaginative and gorgeous. Pictured here is Studio Job's L'afrique carpet. The great news is that they are opening a store here in New York during NYCxDesign week, a little over a week away. Stay tuned for my report!