

From Art to Printed Textiles: Digital Textile Design Course, AFOL Moda Milano

By Renata Pompas

The world's latest contemporary art trends are marked by a deep and fruitful combination between the different forms of expression: for years the trade fair *Abitare il tempo* in Verona has been hosting major designers along with limited edition artwork series, while this year the 53rd Venice Art Biennale, one of the main exhibitions in the world, has entrusted two artists with the restyling of some entertainment and rest areas, thus acknowledging design as a form of art.

In this framework a cooperation was established between the Association *Arte & Arte*, organiser and promoter of the international exhibition *Miniartextil*, and the post-diploma DIGITAL TEXTILE DESIGN course by AFOL Moda Milano, with a view to combine one of the most original expressions of contemporary art that is less contaminated by today's predominant easy glamour effects – i.e. Fiber Art – and textile design, which is experiencing a new creative high.

AFOL Moda Milano is a successful public training institution in contact with major textile and clothing companies, with creative studios and designers which organises vocational post-diploma courses with CFP Paullo.

Its higher education and specialisation courses include the one-year DIGITAL TEXTILE DESIGN course, which teaches young textile designers how to interact with the latest techniques of digital textile printing. This course was organised in concert with the industrial companies, in view of the reorganisation of printing departments based on inkjet technology and of the subsequent changes in design methods.

A team of teachers made up of qualified industry experts is responsible for classroom lessons and laboratory exercises, guided visits to trade fairs, to fashion events and to industrial companies, where students do an internship at the end of the course. The objective is to promote project development by using computer software and to stimulate attention to market trends and contemporary expressions.



This course, which has been awarded many prizes and special mentions, actively participates in initiatives in the fields of textiles, fashion, design and art.

Students digitally processed their personal interpretation of some mini-textiles chosen by the jury and on display at the 19th edition of the exhibition titled *E lucean le stelle ... 2009 Miniartextil-Cosmo*, dedicated to the international astronomy year. They have taken inspiration from three-dimensional works by Muge Durmaz, Ena Furuya, Leva Krumina, Miriam Pet Jacobs, Paule Robin, Margherita Serra and Dagmar Smetanova.

Afsaneh Zar's painting works refer to the gas galaxies by Paule Robin as she has conferred a swirly dimension to the chromatic movements of nitrogen clouds or has musically composed the orbital perfection of star globes. Tiziana Ripanti has instead dotted deep space with globe-shaped brushstrokes, while Adriana Moscato has created a universe studded with stars... of small pasta.

Leva Krumina's crowds look up from the earth to the sky as they express a wish and they turn into multitudes dancing among the stars in the fabric by Adriana Moscato and into little men launched into the space in the work by Afsaneh Zar.

A seductive pomegranate is studded with bright sparks by Muge Durmaz, brightening the lower part of that which is above. Similarly, a shiny effect marks the stone beach, the old knotty barks and the sea shells by Chiara Gatti and by Tiziana Ripanti, who has created a version with low relief spheres scattered throughout a globular sky. She interweaves her dreams in

an endless chain of tangled cosmic universes.

As Mirjam Pet Jacobs embroiders her dreams with thin threads, Afsaneh Zar outlines a human figure floating in the space. Adriana Moscato interprets graphic signs as mysterious molecules bringing life, making them twirl with fluid movements in the sky with gas crowns.

Margherita Serra covers the rock with stardust crystallised in coloured spheres. Dagmar Smetanova's universes are fitted one in the other and Costanza Matranga arranges them with an ordered and light rhythm in a graphic cosmos. Ena Furuya turns the cosmos in a delicate spongy cluster that Federica Lamantea composes in overlapping layers, almost putting them in a geometrical two-dimensional order.

Through these projects for printed fabrics, *Arte & Arte* and the DIGITAL TEXTILE DESIGN course by AFOL Moda Milano show how the cooperation between training, art, school and industry entails a mutual creative and productive combination.

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