

'83'03

**FOSCARINI**

TWENTY YEARS OF LIGHTING DESIGN





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012 **1983\_03**  
twenty “short” years in the life  
of a design company alberto bassi

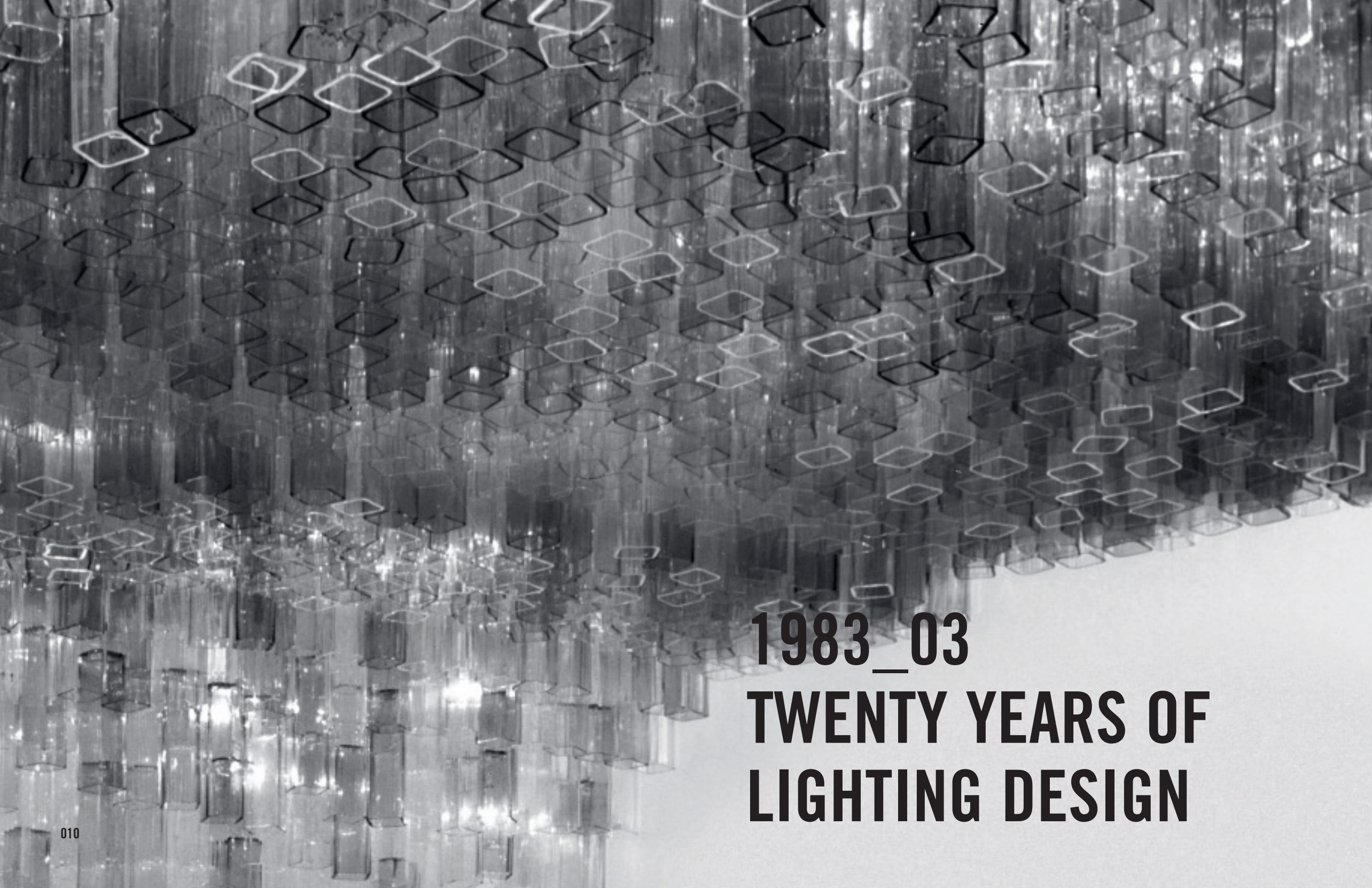
030 **1983\_87**  
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**1983\_03**  
**TWENTY YEARS OF**  
**LIGHTING DESIGN**



## TWENTY “SHORT” YEARS IN THE LIFE OF A DESIGN COMPANY

Alberto Bassi

<sup>1</sup> Renato De Fusco writes: “We choose to study one event rather than another on the basis of the interest we have for this event, be it recent or remote. This criterion confirms the interpretative nature of historiography; it proves that at the basis of the historic work lies the idea of responding to a current practical need”, in A.D’Auria and R. De Fusco, *Il progetto del design*, Etaslibri, Milan 1992, p.81

<sup>2</sup> “To be a historian is to make a project,” states Joseph Rykwert, “through the question which he asks his material - the past - the historian must build a story. There is no history which is not narration...the essence of a story is selection” in *Il progetto della storia*, an interview with J.Rykwert by V.M.Lampugnani in “Domus”, 683, May 1987

<sup>3</sup> E.Mari, *Progetto e passione*, Bollati Boringhieri, Turin 2001, pp.14 essay

<sup>4</sup> The reconstruction of company events is based on the consultation of material conserved in the Foscarini archives (products, prototypes, documents, catalogs, communication, press releases, etc.) and conversations held with Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato (July, August, September, October 2003)

Twenty years are certainly just a drop in the wide river of History; they can however represent a significant chronological milestone if they are considered in terms of a single experience, be it of an individual or a company.

The Foscarini lighting company, which presented its first complete collection of lamps in 1983, reaches an important milestone in time this year.

Twenty years, especially when they reach the present and involve what is contemporary, appear truly too little to make a definitive judgement, to give a reading and evaluation of the facts with the necessary historical and critical objectivity; but they are sufficient to make order (at least one of the possible orders) in the events, to narrate an itinerary, its protagonists, its turning points and major decisions. It therefore appears natural to move through history and fact, where the value and significance of certain episodes and phases appear consolidated, secure, acknowledged; others identify the early nucleus of directions and perspectives. It appears just as obvious that the present condition and its characteristics should orient the reconstruction, the organization of material which was originally quite diversified; orienting it at times towards a generally uniform and unitary understanding. But when speaking of the past, be it distant or near (and looking to the future), it is impossible to ignore the present<sup>1</sup>; it therefore becomes necessary to be selective and take a stand<sup>2</sup>.

This “brief” history would therefore like, first of all, to be a useful orientation tool. The reconstruction of these first twenty years in the life of Foscarini, understood as the progressive consolidation of a business culture oriented towards design, offers different possibilities for interpretation: some of them synchronic, the result of specific events, in particular four significant temporal chapters in the history of the company; others are diachronic and identified with the “ideas”, in the wider sense of strategic and global decisions which progressively became both inspiration and elements of clear identification.

Research and innovation, attention to the quality of the production process and the services offered, and naturally the “good project”, as Enzo Mari dryly defines design<sup>3</sup>, have constituted precise and consistent elements of the Foscarini identity during these twenty years.

*The origins in the twin context of the Murano glass industry and the culture of the design project*

Foscarini<sup>4</sup> was founded in 1981 to produce lighting fixtures for the contract







<sup>5</sup> There is ample literature concerning the production of Murano glass; less so regarding the issues of the design project or dedicated to lighting. For a basic bibliography on these issues and more in general an overview of Italian light design, see A.Bassi, *La luce italiana. Il design delle lampade 1945-2000*, Electa, Milan 2003, pp. 186-203

6. This is one of the cruxes of the theory and practice of industrial design discussed by many scholars; it remains a controversial critical issue, in the face of the "liquidity", to use the suggestive definition supplied by Zygmunt Bauman (Z.Bauman, *Modernità liquida*, Laterza, Roma-Bari 2002) of the ideological, technological and design situation of contemporary modernism

7. Brief observations on this issue in A.Bassi, *Non tutto il "disegnato" è design*, in "Il Sole 24 ore", September 30 2001 and idem, *Arti applicate e design: dialogo e distinguo*, in *Nuovo Antico dalla materia all'artefatto*, edited by F.C. Drago, Rome 2002, pp.37-38

sector: hotels, stores, offices and public spaces. On the Venetian island of Murano, in particular during the Seventies, a significant industry grew parallel to the traditional blown glass production, supplying custom contract work for large architectural projects in prevalently emerging countries such as the Arab countries. A production that was economically very profitable, but frequently more significant in terms of quantity than design or manufacturing quality<sup>5</sup>. Unlike the majority of Murano manufacturers, Foscarini combined the use of various blown glass techniques with a specific attention to the technical lighting characteristics. Glass, but conceived for lighting: a choice which carried precise implications for the design project, and was directed at building a *product-oriented* culture, in the best tradition of Italian design. Not that there was a lack of manufacturers who produced quality lamps in blown glass, though this rarely constituted their main source of production, but like Venini or Vistosi they were often distinguished by ancient tradition and obvious prestige, having long become accustomed to collaborating with important Italian and foreign designers.

This is not the place to develop an articulated essay on the relationship that Italian design maintained with the productive techniques of traditional craft industries<sup>6</sup>.

The theories of industrial design have always correctly tended towards standardized production, large quantities, mechanized standardization; but the dialogue between the world of design and different techniques of execution, hand-crafting, semi-handcrafting, and semi-mechanization, has never diminished throughout history, leading to research, experimentation and stunning results. Similarly, in theory and in practice, there has been a constant reduction over time in the central role of the series, the significantly large production quantity, in favor of the one-of-a-kind or limited edition piece. Italian design, and especially, and fortunately, its protagonists, has expressed many different spirits and interests, including experimentation with different production methods that are not industrial. If there is one distinction to be made, it concerns the need to separate designing and making, otherwise we are speaking of crafts tout court: if a project exists, methods and production numbers do not always have to be considered major constraints<sup>7</sup>.

Over the course of the Twentieth century, blown glass has been one of the most interesting "venues", physically and culturally, for the dialogue between a modern design conception and an ancient and almost entirely manual production technique. Sometimes, during the past century, significant encounters occurred between designers, glassblowers and manufacturers on Murano; in other cases the same glasshouses created significant products in terms of design. In several situations, attempts were made to redirect the traditional production of Murano glass more consistently towards more

<sup>8</sup> On the transformation underway in the field of industrial design, and more generally in relation to the economic, social, productive, technological changes and the consumer culture, there is abundant literature. Among others, very different in their configuration and the direction of their analysis, the following are useful for orientation:

G. De Michelis, *Aperto molteplici continuo*, Dunod, Milan 1998; F. Carmagnola and M. Ferraresi, *Merchi di culto. Ipermerce e società mediale*, Castelvevchi, Rome 1999; G. Fabris, *Il nuovo consumatore: verso il postmoderno*, Franco Angeli, Milan 2003; V. Flusser, *Filosofia del design*, Bruno Mondadori, Milan 2003

<sup>9</sup> Commercially sustained from the very beginning by the successful and lasting collaboration with Carlo Manfredi.

industrialized styles, not always with satisfactory results, and towards more up-to-date distribution, marketing and communication models: this occurred in many large glasshouses, light design companies, small manufacturers or self-production interests.

This was undoubtedly a quest for a more complex and articulated balance, focused on the present without losing sight of history, that still appears as a necessity today, to provide renewed vigor to a context and to glass manufacturers who have become less vital over time.

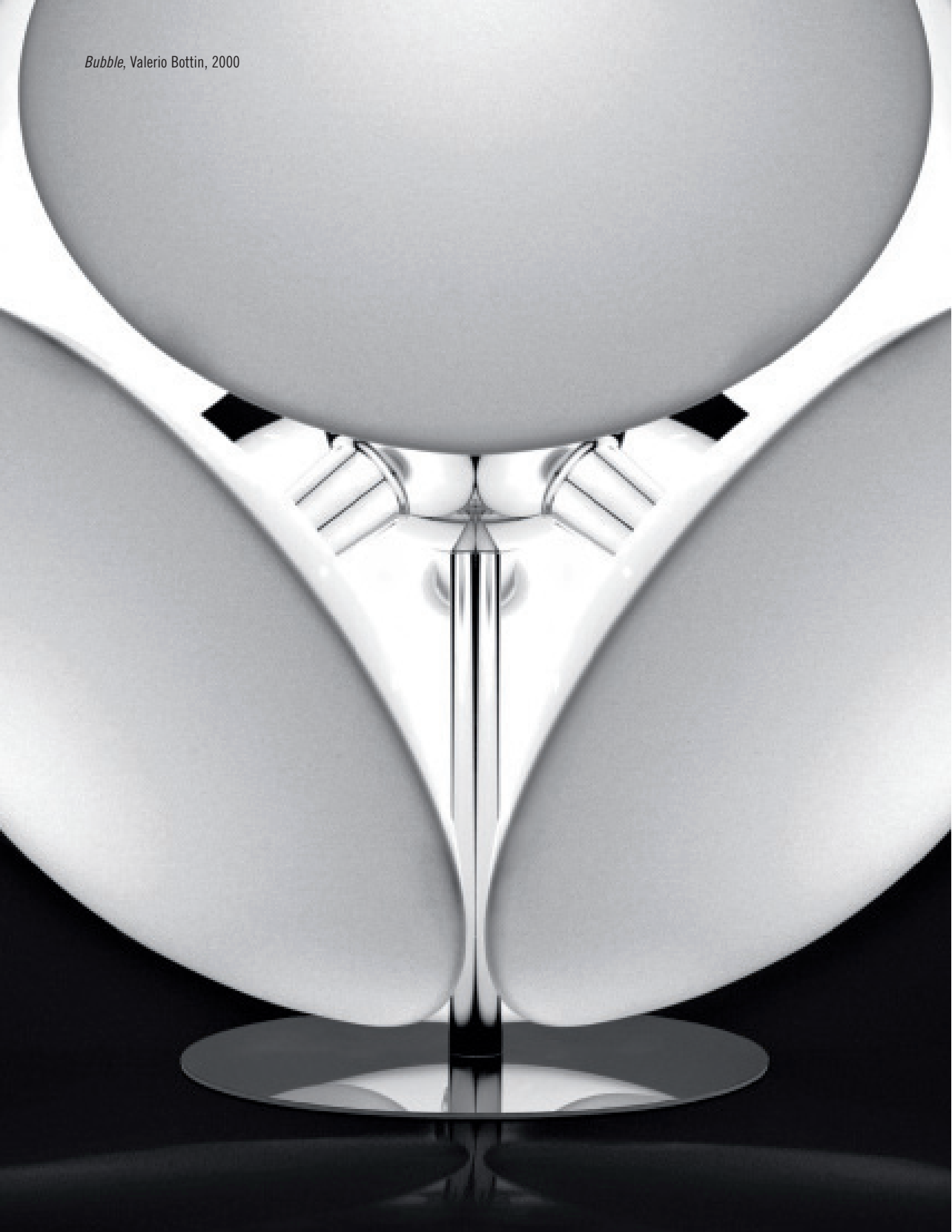
Compared to the majority of companies on Murano, Foscari originated with a specificity, a basic “weakness” resulting from a specific choice and revealing itself over time to be a fundamental resource. It does not in fact own its own furnace, nor does it produce itself, but turns each time to more or less mechanized craftsmen, or to industry, creating all the necessary conditions to make its own lamps. This practice of using suppliers divided by technology, materials and production has now become rather common in the era of the tertiary and market globalization<sup>8</sup>, but in the early Eighties it certainly was not, especially for those who worked on Murano. This constraint-opportunity, constituted by the condition of being a design firm “without a furnace”, favored a mental approach which tended towards total flexibility and freedom, particularly in the search for the most appropriate solution to a design problem, followed by the identification of the most appropriate technological and manufacturing techniques and consequently the most suitable producer. A *problem-solving* methodology which over time proved functional to sustaining the research conducted with the designers into a variety of materials and techniques.

Starting in 1982, Foscari complemented its contract production, cautiously at first and later in an increasingly convinced and convincing manner, with a standardized production. It initially served to integrate the company's production and sales cycle during the moments of cyclical contraction and dilution of contract commissions; over time the catalog production grew increasingly important until it completely replaced custom and made to order furnishings, abandoned during the early Nineties.

The standard production was stimulated from the very beginning by Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato<sup>9</sup>, employees who later became the owners of the company, and personally took responsibility for the entire manufacturing cycle: from the design, to the engineering, to the search for the glass manufacturers, to the visual communication and marketing strategy. The first phase of production conjugated two directions: on one hand the techniques for blowing Murano glass, on the other the attempt to make them dialogue with contemporary design culture. These were lamps which dedicated specific attention to the principles of lighting and made constant reference to the masters and the manufacturers of light design. Fixtures in

*Lightweight*, Tom Dixon, 1995





<sup>10</sup> We are not interested here in a reflection on organizational and managerial models of design companies; we might say however that, compared to the traditional centralized, family-run and often “closed” structure of many first-generation design companies, which are now experiencing difficulty in the change of generations, Foscarini from the very beginning built an interesting “open” and flexible structure around the owners

<sup>11</sup> A trend in contemporary design which Clino Trini Castelli defines as *transitive design*: “with this term, borrowed from the latin *transige* – go beyond, go to the other side, we designate those industrial products which connect the past and the future with no nostalgic intention... as a sign of continuity in change... the configuration is archetype, but the emotional details are modern” (C.T.Castelli, *Transitive design*, Electa, Milan 1999, pp.124, 136)

<sup>12</sup> Sociologist Giampaolo Fabris, referring to the transformations of the market and consumers, speaks of show-products, which function basically because of their ability to communicate and to make “something other” desirable beyond their own performance and usage value: “the products turn into signs, symbols, communication” (G.Fabris, *op.cit.*, p.49)

blown glass that made light, for which they conceived original solutions that often challenged the glassblowers and forced them into directions which were new to them. Lamps with clean and simple shapes, often distinguished by movement or mechanical solutions, which used glass for the quality of the material and its colors, attempting to go beyond a purely decorative configuration or surface treatment.

*Foscarini towards global quality: design, research and innovation, communication*

The acquisition of the company by Urbinati and Vecchiato in 1988 led to a decisive turnaround in the strategies and business policies, including the use of independent designers for product and communication, and the relentless pursuit of an adequate production, distribution, commercial and service structure.

During these years, the company confirmed an organizational method based on *teamwork*, where different capabilities concurred towards the definition, discussion and solution of strategic and operative problems<sup>10</sup>.

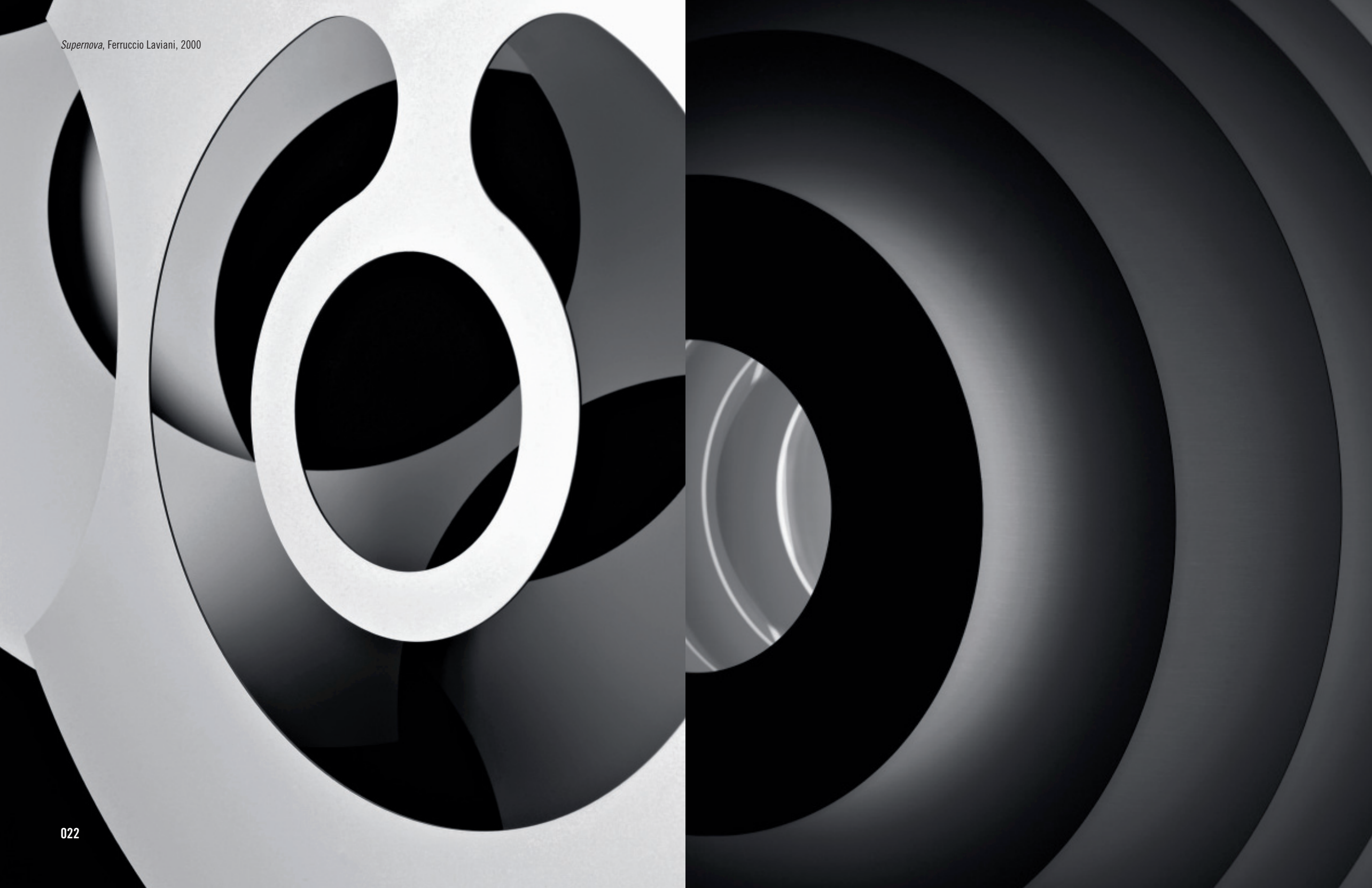
This led to the choice of Rudi von Wedel as a consultant for communication and design; through him Foscarini came into contact with architect Rodolfo Dordoni, who would be their art director from 1988 to 1993, designing several highly successful lamps, rethinking their visual communication with a new logo and catalog, involving a series of young designers and expanding the selection of products. Interpreting the origins and character of Foscarini, Dordoni worked on lamps which were inspired by the idea of “retrieving the forms of memory”<sup>11</sup>, reinterpreting traditional forms in a contemporary spirit, as in *Lumiere* or in the *Buds* suspension; they also accepted the arduous challenge of redesigning the classic Murano glass chandelier, as in the *Venice Collection* by Patrice Butler and the suspensions by Marco Mencacci.

During the Dordoni period, two new models appeared which, each in their own way, would open new horizons for design, as well as market and image:

*Orbital* by Ferruccio Laviani and *Havana* by Jozeph Forakis.

For the first time, in *Orbital*, the company's tradition of using blown glass was abandoned in favor of colored silk-screened glass in a composition with powerful visual and sculptural impact. The lamp-object by Laviani understood and tuned into the changes in the culture of design and consumers, seeking to overcome the rigid correspondence between form and function in search of new sensorial, emotional and visual qualities<sup>12</sup>.

Even more radically, *Havana* adopted polypropylene, which was certainly more economical than glass but used in a product with superior formal and production qualities. This marked the beginning of research into other technologies and materials to complement blown or industrial glass, which would lead in the following decade to acknowledged successes such as *Mite*



<sup>13</sup> See F.Carmagnola and V.Pasca, *Minimalismo etica delle forme e nuova semplicità nel design*, Lupetti, Milan 1996

<sup>14</sup> Concerning these issues see, among others, G.Fabris, *op.cit.*, pp. 386-425

by Marc Sadler, in woven glass fiber with carbon or kevlar® threads, awarded the Compasso d'oro-ADI in 2001, the most prestigious recognition for products of Italian design.

In 1993 the collaboration between Dordoni and Foscarini came to an end; the company chose to expand its design horizons, contacting new designers and putting itself on the market with a more ample and diversified production. The Nineties witnessed the international consolidation of minimalism<sup>13</sup>, to use an indicative but limited label. Seen from something of a distance, one may recognize in the simple, essential and minimal lines that characterize a large part of the decade's products, an answer and reaction above all to the visual, formal and chromatic excesses of the Alchimia-Memphis style of post-modernism. A return to a correct design of forms and construction solutions based on methods of industrial production, a more serene and reassuring look, in a historical phase marked by profound modifications in the economic, political, social and cultural structures.

The search for a new identity in the second half of the decade led Foscarini to collaborate with architects and designers such as Piero Lissoni, Ludovica Serafini and Roberto Palomba, Giovanni Levanti, Lievore Asociados and Prospero Rasulo. The visual design was entrusted to Claudio Dell'Olio from Box<sup>2</sup> in Milan, who chose Santi Caleca to photograph the lamps for the catalog in furnished or domestic settings suggesting, in a strongly communicative manner, the usage and understanding of the physical and cultural characteristics of the products.

One of the more successful results of the period proved to be, for example, the Dress lamp by Defne Koz, which used blown glass to confer a soft and persuasive line to the table lamp. Attention was also reserved to different design languages, as witnessed by the series of essential and angular chandeliers by Tom Dixon, one of England's most interesting designers; or Dolmen by Ferruccio Laviani which interpreted the return of the Sixties and pop culture language; or again the attention towards the poetic and illusionistic work of Denis Santachiara, whose little Elfo was an invitation to a curious and interactive approach towards objects.

During the Nineties, the quality of the company processes and the control of service to the final consumer became a matter of specific interest.

The company obtained the ISO 9001 certification, attesting to the suitability of the overall configuration of internal operative processes. Increasing and specific attention would also be dedicated to *customer satisfaction*, a central requirement for the positive performance of a company on the market<sup>14</sup>.

The turn of the century had Foscarini involved in reinforcing its organization and production structure, perceiving the need to consolidate its brand name on the market by expanding and defining the role of communication. Following a phase of transition, in which it sought a dialogue and affinity with the world

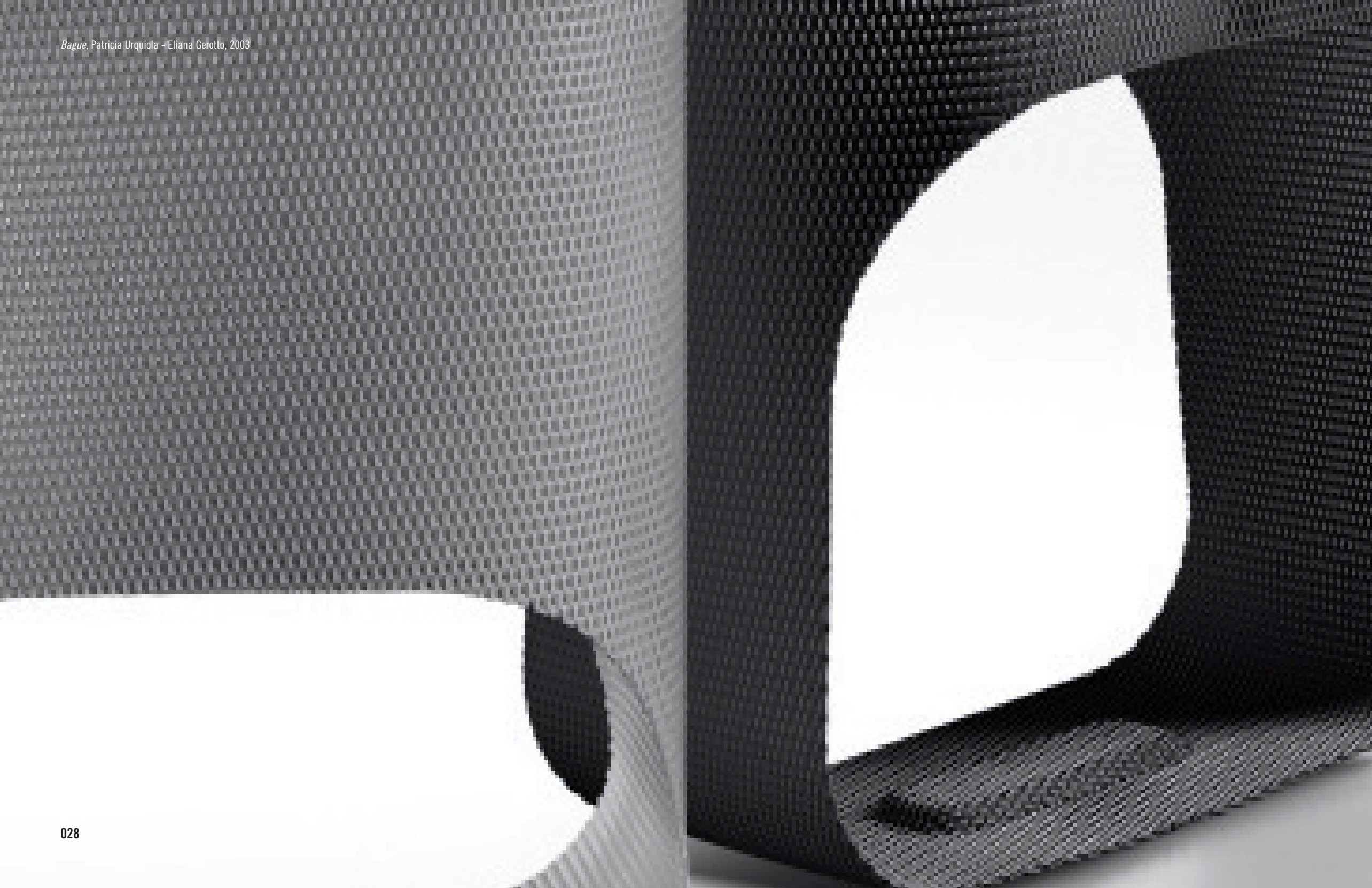


of fashion and experimented original methods of communication, such as the fascinating “fashion show with lamps” held during the Furniture Fair in 2000, Foscari identified a precise and confident strategy for its image and market position. This was achieved thanks to sustained research in design, culminating with a number of interesting lighting fixtures and the use of an articulated range of communications tools, developed in collaboration with Artemio Croatto of the Designwork visual design studio in Udine.

The opening of this new phase was marked symbolically and operatively by the new series of lamps Mite, Tite, Lite, Kite by Marc Sadler. They represent the result of a research process lasting several years, and the relationship with one of the most innovative contemporary industrial designers who works globally and in different areas of the design field; in 2001 they won the Compasso d’oro-ADI award, receiving widespread acclaim by critics and the media, as well as the market. This was the culmination of an operative company methodology which encouraged the dialogue between research, innovation and design: new materials, a clean and contemporary composition for a warm, domestic and efficient light.

The lamps created over the past three years seem to fit naturally into the same tendency, involving other designers and experimenting with different solutions in production technology or in the choice or combination of avant-garde materials, frequently derived or borrowed from more advanced fields. This is true, for example, of the futuristic O-space in polyurethane by the young Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai, or Blob, produced in rotomoulding by Karim Rashid, and Bague by Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto, who combine the visual roughness of metal mesh with the tactile pleasure made possible by a special surface treatment. The search for design-visual-productive qualities does not obviously forego the original passion for glass: in Lampon, just like in the earlier Cocò, both by Aldo Cibic, the traditional glass-blowing technique is deliberately “forced” to adapt and measure itself against the contemporary language of design.

Foscari’s is therefore a “short” history, which leaves a solid heritage for the present: several classics of Italian light design; a solid, specific business structure, centered on the culture of the design project and the idea of industrial design as a process of research and innovation. An excellent formula for the future.





**1983\_87**

**DESIGNING GLASS  
LAMPS IN MURANO**



First Foscarini headquarters  
Murano, Fondamenta Manin 1, 1983

## 1983\_87 DESIGNING GLASS LAMPS IN MURANO

The history of Foscarini is marked by four significant moments, each corresponding to a choice or decision which led to the progressive evolution of the company. Phase one coincides with its origins in the productive context of Murano, characterized by the intent to create a dialogue between the traditional manufacturing capability in the field of blown glass and the culture of design.

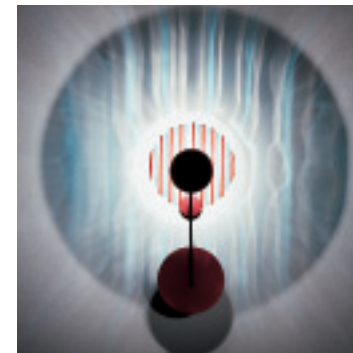
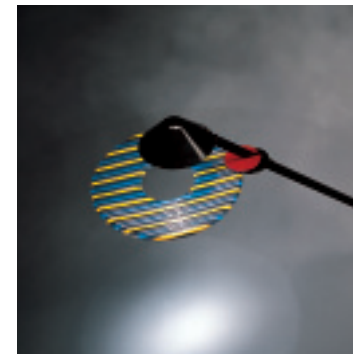
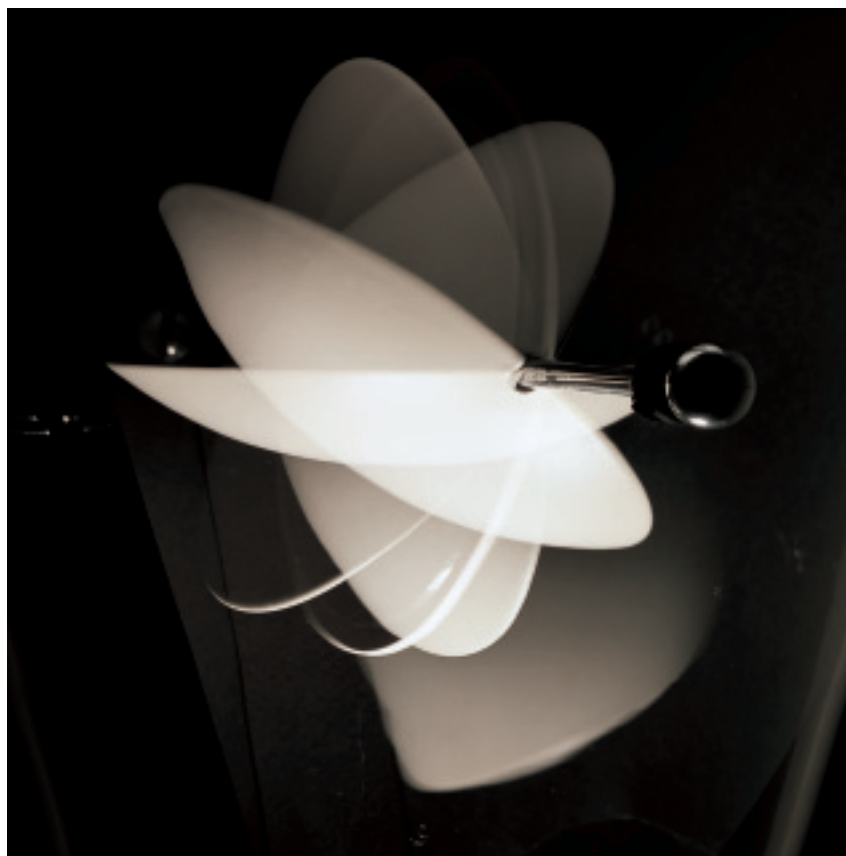
On November 13 1983, in the company headquarters located at Fondamenta Manin 1, on Murano, the first Foscarini catalog was presented, featuring the production of standardized lamps designed by Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato: an official debut at a meeting with the Italian representatives and a German importer, the original nucleus of a marketing and distribution system.

The company had been founded two years earlier on Murano by Riccardo Olivieri – identified by a logo featuring an “F” inspired by the *ferro* on the tip of the Venetian gondola – to produce contract lighting for interiors, winning conspicuous commissions prevalently from Arab countries.

The company had no production capability, and was organized essentially around a technical division for the development of projects, assigned to outside professionals for elaboration (often important design firms), and a network of suppliers specialized in making the various components of lighting fixtures.

Urbinati and Vecchiato were part of the technical division; they are not originally from Murano, though Vecchiato was quite familiar with the glass industry on the island thanks to his previous collaboration with Fratelli Toso, and both had attended architecture school, respectively in Rome and in Venice. Their contribution to the company became better defined and grew in time, due to their increasing participation in the projects within the technical division, improving the quality of the overall result, and simultaneously rationalizing the work organization.

A certain dissatisfaction regarding their exclusively technical contribution, and the search for economic continuity in time, led Urbinati and Vecchiato to suggest the production of standard lighting fixtures to complement the contract work. The idea seemed to be of little interest to the original owner of Foscarini but the two went ahead with enthusiasm and passion. Looking at the possibility of moving into the Murano market, with an eye to contemporary developments in lighting technology, particularly the new halogen sources, in 1982 they designed two lamps, Graphos and Clessidra,



across, from the top clockwise:  
*Floppi* 1984; *Lift*, 1985; *Luna*, 1986,  
detail of the reflector mechanism and overall  
view; *Graphos*, 1982; all designed by Carlo  
Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato.  
from the top:  
*Rolli* and *Graphos*; Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato, 1983 and 1982

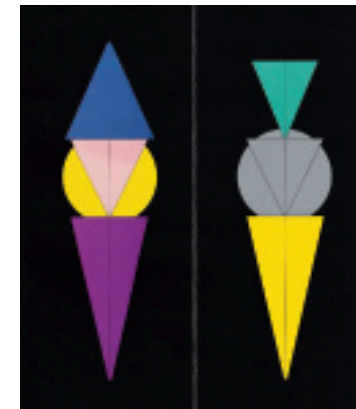
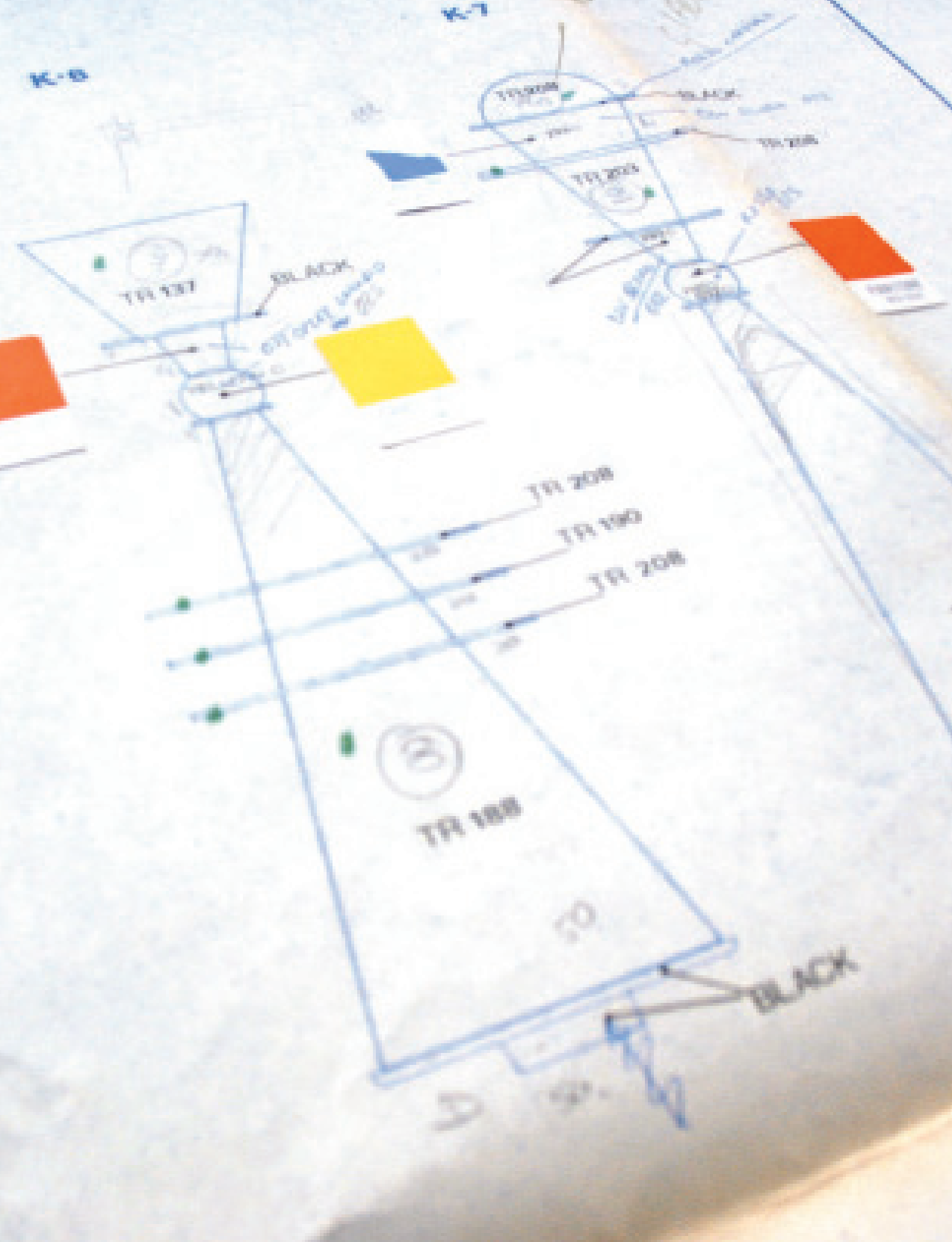
which were presented in September at the Euroluce in Milan. From that moment on, with few exceptions, they would remain the sole designers for the company until 1989.

Contrary to other manufacturers on Murano who sought to produce “beautiful glass” shown off by the light source, “ours, they maintain, was a lighting project associated with the use of glass”. *Graphos* originated in the choice of a 150 watt screw-in halogen light source; the table or wall version was constituted by a cone-shaped shade, blown into a mold and cut diagonally, which fit into a transparent disc opened by hand, in turquoise glass – providing a more hand-crafted look – to diffuse a halo of light on the table top and conceal the metal supporting structure. To avoid shadows on the glass cast by the socket, the shape of the shade in the floor lamp followed its form, moving down into the stem. Originally produced for Euroluce in a series of ten, but remaining in production through 1995, it made use of bright colors (white, pink and blue) for the outer surface of the glass, which remained cased in white on the inside to reflect the light, and to enhance the form alone. *Graphos* made clear the designers’ intention to associate clean design with superior technical and manufacturing quality: “it was quite unusual on Murano to make ‘non-decorated’ glass of this type, they say, because such simplicity demanded extreme precision in the finish, and would look ‘insignificant’”.

A debut generated by the necessity to find a specific language for the design of lamps in Murano glass, inspired by their familiarity with the work of the masters of Italian design, but at the same time constrained by a productive specificity which, in light of contemporary research, was in dire need of being revitalized.

The interest manifested during the Show in Milan and the beginning of their association with Carlo Manfredi, who has been marketing consultant for the company ever since, led Urbinati and Vecchiato to persevere with their design work; the following year they completed their first catalog, and began to set up their distribution network. Characterized by a green cover using a material which was interesting to the touch, and with a wing on the back cover which made it stick out when placed on a bookshelf, it was illustrated with images of lamps that were turned on and off.

Three more styles were added to the original two: *Refloz*, *Rolli* and *Indice*. *Rolli* was the most “Muranese” of the lamps designed by the two: it used low voltage, projecting the effect of the glass on the wall to exploit the typical technique of colored glass rods, and using the material in an innovative manner as a filter, rather than a container. *Refloz* explored the relationship between the halogen source and the material. The result was a singular object where the technique and the finish of the glass – the upper disk was opened by hand, the foot was blown in a mold and cut diagonally



– increased the potential of the luminous flux which was diffused and reflected following the movement of the disk.

Floppi, Plana and Pivot appeared in the catalog in 1984. The Floppi suspension was the first Foscarini lamp to use unusually thick pressed glass made “almost” industrially on Murano (the manufacturer was a company which habitually made pressed glass bowls for dentists), studied to use a powerful linear halogen lamp at 360 degrees and to generate a pleasing effect of refraction. Plana was the result of a two-year study on the configuration of an appropriate lightweight mold for a diffuser with an apparently simple shape, derived from a softly folded sheet of paper.

The opportunity to take advantage of every fixture to experiment with manufacturing technologies and glass techniques with different lighting properties, was an early confirmation of the advantages of the initial decision not to create a manufacturing division or glass furnace within the company. A condition which was more of an intuition, initially, than a deliberate choice, bred in a context where it was problematic to make conspicuous investments to build a productive structure within the company, and, in the end, unnecessary, given the available resources. In 1985, the standard production reached a twenty-percent share of the company’s turnover and the first collection designed by independent designers was introduced. Adam D. Tihany and Joseph Mancini conceived Wassily off the Wall, inspired by the painterly world of Kandinsky and the ballet theatre of the Bauhaus, presented at the annual EuroLuce.

Illuminated objects rather than lamps, they in fact housed only 20 watt bulbs; they were table and wall lamps produced by composing solid forms in primary colors, held together by polished metal mountings. Expensive products which were well received in foreign markets, suitable for public and private spaces: they obtained their first significant success in press coverage, and not only in trade magazines. The American architect, specialized in contract furnishings, designed a scenographic and decorative collection, quite distant from Foscarini’s initial spirit, but somehow emblematic of the potential in the field and of the depths that could be explored in collaboration with independent designers. This project in a way anticipated the needs that would lead several years later to the decision to collaborate with Rodolfo Dordoni.

The project Lampa d’arte, from a concept by Milton Glaser, Adam D. Tihany and Luciano Vistosi, followed in the principle of paying homage to the masters of contemporary art. The series of ten luminous editions, a tribute to artists who were sensitive to the theme of light, found form in two works: Giorgio Uno dedicated to Morandi, and Giorgio Due to De Chirico, an architectural model in varnished wood embedded with colored and ground vitreous inclusions. They were exhibited in New York at Bloomingdale’s

previous pages:  
*Wassily off the Wall*, Adam D. Tihany  
with Joseph Mancini, 1985.  
below:  
catalog and brochure.  
Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato,  
1983 and 1985

Department Store during a show dedicated to Italian design.  
In the meantime, Urbinati and Vecchiato designed the Kigò table lamp and the Lift suspension lamp. Starting as always with the application of the principles of lighting, in Lift a pair of counter-positioned dichroic lamps move along wires, held taut by the weight of the glass, to illuminate the ceiling canopy and the counterweight shade. The following year they produced Luna, an essential table lamp in transparent glass which directed the luminous flux by means of a concave mirrored lens, and Monolite, a floor lamp with an extruded aluminum body.  
During this first phase of their activity, Foscarini created the Colora wall system, yet another experience in industrializing a decorative element such as the hand-cast glass tile, rather popular in interior decorating at the time. These were pressed slats, available in ten colors, inserted into a metal profile structure, interchangeable to allow variation in the chromatic composition of the wall. The decor was none other than the optical effect produced by the double concave surface. At the end of the decade, several causes, including the international economic conditions determined by the appearance of competing labor markets, marked the beginning of an inexorable decline in the traditional commissions of custom contract work and with them the commercial fate of many glass factories on Murano. The original owner of the company, not interested in leading the company towards the exclusive production of standard lamps, decided to sell. In February 1988 Urbinati and Vecchiato bought Foscarini. This passage determined the beginning of a new phase and new opportunities, given that the foundation had been laid for design and production capabilities within the company, with the capacity to respond to a wide range of requirements, and complemented by market and advertising penetration. The following years would be characterized on the one hand by the need to develop design; on the other by the pressing requirements of directly managing a company.

*Lampa d'arte*, Milton Glaser, Adam D. Tihany  
and Luciano Vistosi, 1985 (wood table by Livio  
De Marchi and glass by Pino Signoretto);  
stand design for Euroluce, Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato, 1983



LAMPADE  
**REFLOZ**







across:  
elevation-section of the articulated joint  
between plate and base, Foscarini technical  
division, 1983

### REFLOZ 1983-94

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato

Refloz provides an example of the experimental direction undertaken by Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato when they began designing standard lamps, as well as the character of Foscarini's initial production: the search for an effective fusion between the hand-made processing of blown Murano glass and the application of technical lighting principles. Refloz is essentially constituted by the fitting of two parts, a cone-shaped support in glass cut diagonally at the base which fits into an ample disk shade, made of glass and opened by hand. Positioned in the upper section of the cone, the halogen source uses the convex reflecting surface of the disk as a reflector, and upon reaching the tip of the bronze-finished brass cone, diffuses the luminous flux towards the inside.

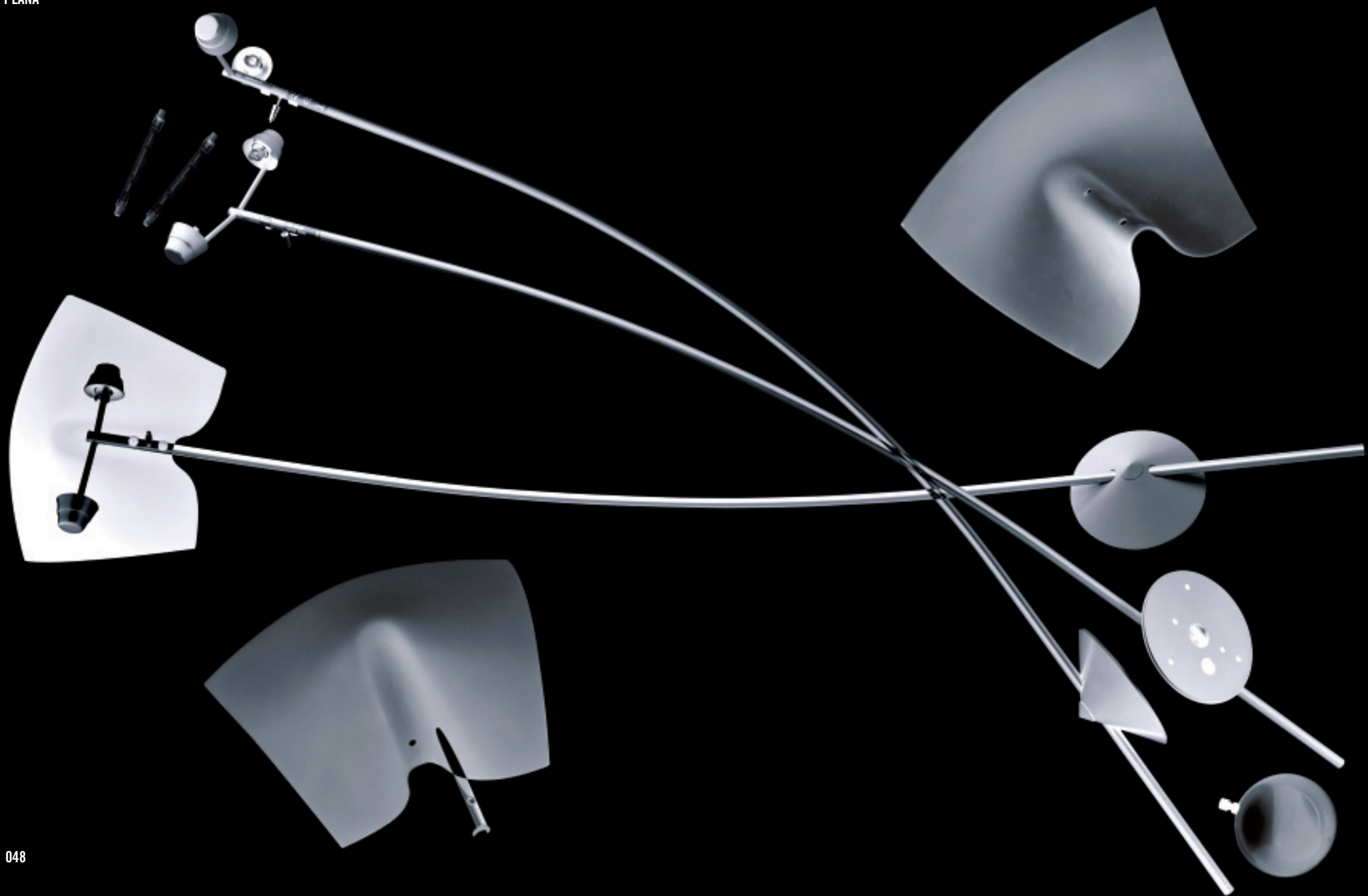
In this end portion the incisions on the surface of the cone combined with the use of a threaded ring fasten the two parts securely and simultaneously allow the disk to be inclined, thus varying the overall luminous effect. The project develops the themes of fitting geometric shapes together – the cone and the circle – and the use of pure colors in vitreous illuminating bodies. The result is an extremely simple design, where the chromatic treatment of light creates emotion. The lamp was presented in January 1983 in Frankfurt and in September at the EuroLuce in Milan. It remained in production through 1994; it is part of the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum collection in New York.

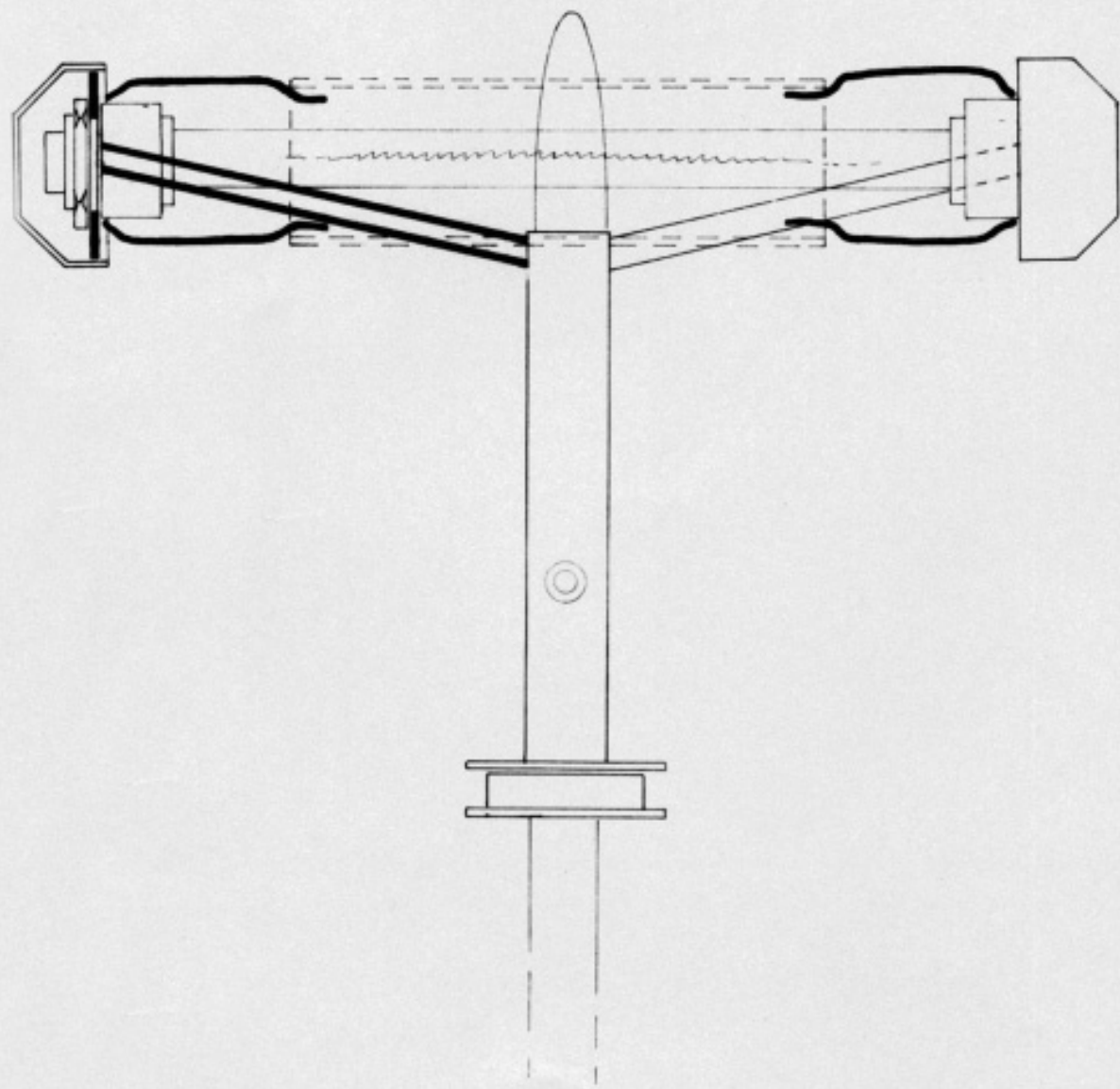




LAMPADE  
**PLANA**





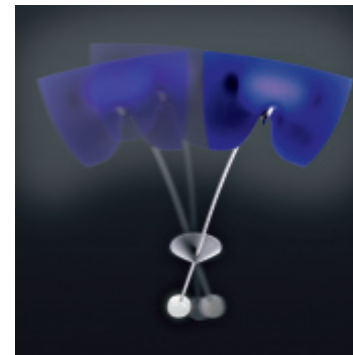


*PARTICOLARE MONTATURA PLANA*

*SCALA 1:1*

**PLANA 1984**

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



across:  
section of the system used to fasten the glass  
to the bulb support, Foscarini technical  
division 1984

This project also deals with moving the ceiling light source off center, by creating a reflected light which may be shifted 360 degrees and using a linear halogen source. Once the shape of the glass shade was defined, derived from the simple undulation of a piece of paper to mitigate the glare of direct light, the efforts by Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato concentrated mainly on the technical possibilities of processing the material. Having excluded casting the glass while hot, because of the weight and the poor esthetic quality of the result, as well as pressed glass, because of the imprecise nature of the details, they studied a mold that could produce a double shade from a single blown piece, to reduce excessive production time and the waste of material.

The very nature of blowing allows the production of lightweight pieces, characterized by slender walls and a uniform consistency. This was a new "flat" technique for working Murano glass, and during the initial period of production, unlike now, the furnace costs and the cold-work costs were practically identical.

There were not many manufacturers capable of making the number of cuts necessary to define the shade with precision. The glass, white on the inside to reflect the light and colored on the outside (white or blue), acid-finished to avoid cutting edges, was fastened to the support inside the fold, making a single hole that would not be visible from the outside. The thin metal support, coated with epoxydic powder paint, was then fit

into a swiveling support on the ceiling, or on the wall, in the shape of a cone, with a mechanism to block it at the end of a full turn to prevent twisting the electric wires.

To balance the weight of the shade, the support ended with a glass sphere that could rotate, using the ceiling as a surface, thanks to the interposition of a joint. Plana was long one of the most renowned and commercially successful lamps by Foscarini, which was able to invent an effective solution to the question of moving light through space without relinquishing the specific language of blown glass, a question solved by endowing it with a particular sense of weightlessness.

**1988\_93**

**THE DESIGN PROJECT  
AND NEW MATERIALS**



*Havana, Jozeph Forakis, 1993*

## 1988\_93 THE DESIGN PROJECT AND NEW MATERIALS

Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato, now age thirty, bought Foscarini in February 1988 when the sales of the company, which employed about ten people, were divided equally between standard and contract lighting. The direct management of the company demanded a serious commitment in terms of time, resources and energies which were subtracted from their personal involvement in design and redirected at defining an appropriate strategy and operating mode.

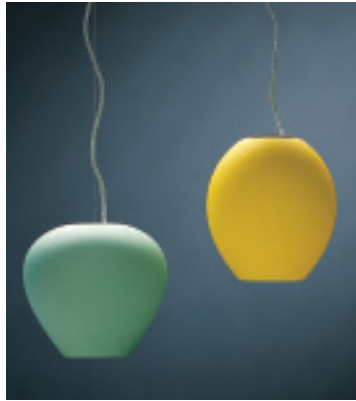
It soon became clear that the marketing network needed to be strengthened, especially outside of Italy, and that it was necessary to unequivocally demonstrate to the outside world the consolidation process that the company was undergoing, addressed specifically to architects, interior designers, distributors and possible clients, taking care to create a dialogue with the specialized media.

The turning point in communication came when Rudi von Wedel was chosen to direct public relations, and at the end of 1988 when Rodolfo Dordoni, architect and designer, was entrusted with the artistic direction. This collaboration implied a change of mentality for the company, which turned from direct action and control over all initiatives to sharing decisions and a subdivision of roles.

This was an important passage towards a more advanced culture of business management. Dordoni brought with him the idea of a close relationship between designer and company, where development meant a progressive definition of general operating methods in addition to the design of single pieces, both in terms of product and market suitability. The architect from Milan was therefore instrumental in helping Foscarini acquire a clear conception of the needs of an industrial design company. Dordoni designed a new easy-to-read logo which used a compact capital stick font in dusty blue, renouncing any and all references to Venice, even figuratively. "For a company that produced on the island, states the designer, but added technological elements to its products which were not typical of Murano, it became indispensable to abandon the term 'Murano' which had always accompanied the brand name, identifying it with a reality which had grown apart from the actual company identity.

The clean but important new graphics communicate an image of solidity, quality and formal rigor, of high productive technology."

The 1989 catalog designed by Dordoni included standard lamps, classic chandeliers and contract elements in a single container. Totally renovated



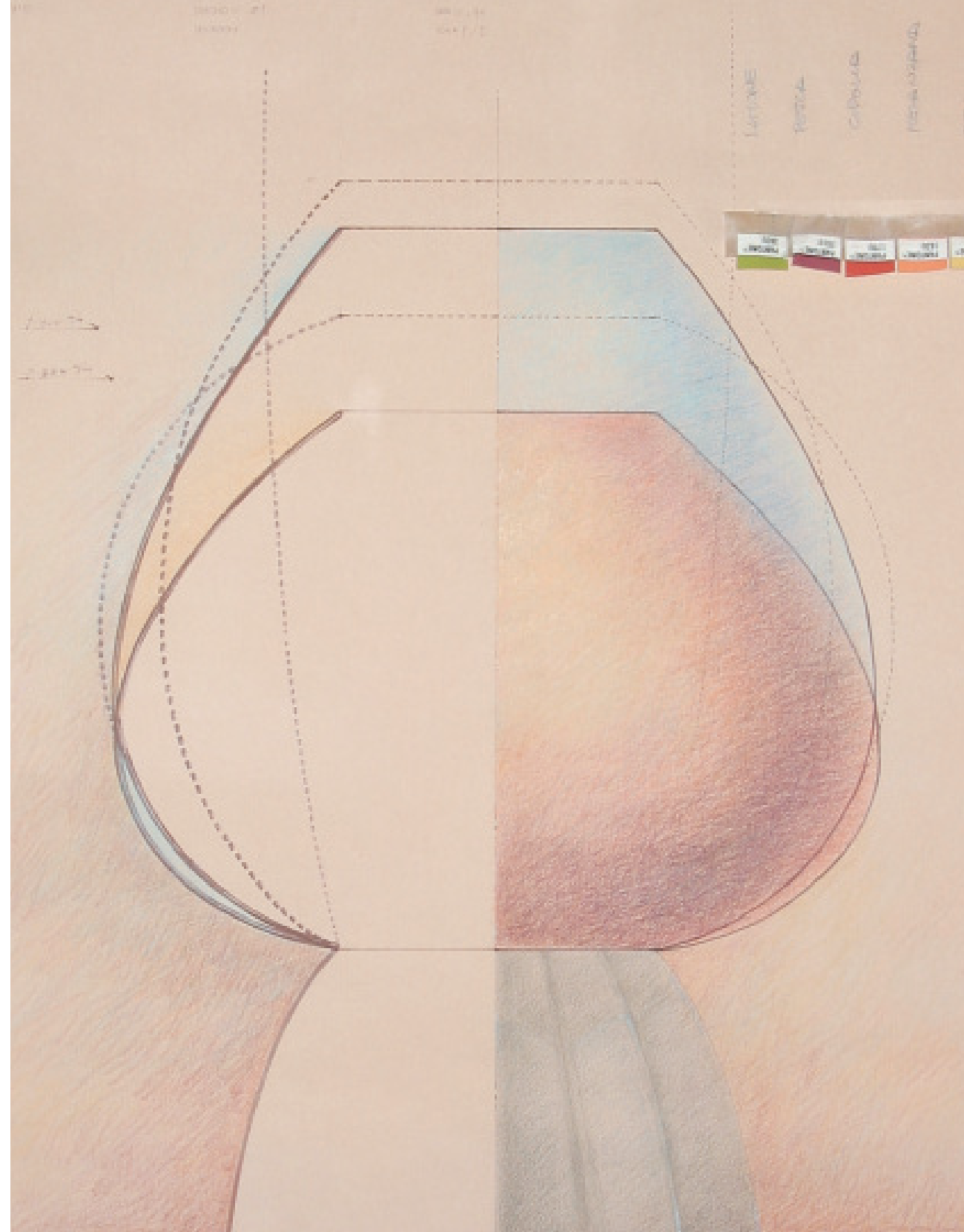
*Folio*, Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato, 1990;  
*Buds*, Rodolfo Dordoni, 1993  
 next page:  
 drawing with an indication of dimensions  
 and colors for the Buds shade, Rodolfo  
 Dordoni, 1993

in its structure, it was divided by types of lamps, each corresponding to a chromatic combination between the background and the text, composed with the same character as the logo; the lamps, photographed by Emilio Tremolada, were presented full-page against a grey background, and switched on. The same year the designer created the lay out for the stand at EuroLuce, where the new logo was presented. "We created an institutional stand in which we used video images to narrate the history of all the products. A crooked wall full of Foscarini logos, each one different, which repeated the graphics of the invitation to EuroLuce in transparent acetate with gold writing, featured several niches which exhibited a selection of lights rigorously made with white glass. They cut through ceiling, pavement, dust blue panels, creating a scenographic perspective effect." In the same period, in an agreement with Danish manufacturer Louis Poulsen, Foscarini decided to act as the Italian distributor for the lamps of this renowned manufacturer, which produced fixtures designed by Poul Henningsen, Verner Panton and other major Scandinavian architects and designers.

This activity lasted a little less than a year, and originated in Foscarini's desire to expand its own market, recognizing an affinity in terms of design research in the attention to the quality of artificial light, and the creation of a suitable atmosphere in domestic environments.

The lamps designed in the first three years by Urbinati and Vecchiato were structured around the relationship between glass and light sources, like Skeet, their only experience in the field of pressed spot lights. Folio achieved remarkable commercial success, remaining in production from 1990 through the present, thanks to its reduced depth from the wall, its easy but not common design, its fine capacity for the diffusion of light and color. Like a page shaped along its diagonals, it is obtained by a tri-fold process of thermoforming a cylinder of blown glass cut in half. Lumiere and Fruits, the first lamps designed by Dordoni which have been Foscarini icons ever since, were created the same year. Still successful today, Lumiere was a re-interpretation of the classic table lamp with lampshade, where the different components and materials – the tripod support in die-cast aluminum and the essential shade in satin-finished blown glass – are united in harmonious dialogue. A meditation on the archetypal form of light fixtures which fit well into the tendency seeking a 'reassuring retrieval of memory', and anticipated the bare design and formal reduction of minimalism.

In Fruits, the emphasis was on the volume and the design of the base, in painted metal, and the upper shade in colored blown glass was produced in five different variations with simple forms. The figurative relationship between the simple forms of glass and their supports was similarly





*Quadro*, Giovanni Levanti, 1993;  
*Paris, Venice Collection*, Patrice Butler, 1992;  
*Lucindo*, Marco Mencacci, 1992



058



*Table Light/Wall Light*, James Wines-Site,  
*Abitare il tempo*, Verona, 1991

explored in other styles such as Bijou, Blossoms and Buds, designed by the same architect through 1993, the year in which Dordoni ended his collaboration with Foscarini.

In the definition of products, from that moment entrusted to a number of designers who had previously been introduced with Dordoni, the choice of construction and materials became closely linked to the project options. This led the company, in 1992, to use non-Murano plate glass for *Orbital* by Ferruccio Laviani, to produce *Nostromo* by Patrice Butler, a ceiling track system which could be composed into different configurations, and the following year to use polypropylene and polyethylene for *Havana* by Jozeph Forakis.

Foscarini did not abandon blown glass but became oriented, independently of the materials, towards an industrial design product where design experimentation was the focus of attention. Thus *Orbital* was an illuminated object rather than a fixture for lighting, with a strong graphic impact and bright colors, and a careful study of the metal details which were all “visible”; *Havana* was also an exercise in economy, as far as elements and construction materials were concerned, but not in terms of lighting performance. Foscarini attempted simultaneously to renovate the traditional typology of chandeliers with the *Venice Collection* by Butler, a contemporary interpretation of the Venetian model with shaped arms, and with *Lucindo* and *Ramon* by Marco Mencacci. A similar operation was attempted by Giovanni Levanti with *Quadro*, an essential wall lamp which created a dialogue between the two different glass types in the shade and the support.

This moving along different paths, allowing different design directions to coexist, was a positive characterization of this phase of Foscarini’s growth into a *design driven* company. Aware of the role of design, but explicitly interested in the implications of developing ideas, where strictly commercial and marketing considerations do not appear as priorities or restrictions. The rationality of the company’s global configuration coexisted with the respect for intuition and passion in the selection of designs worthy of development.

Thus Foscarini consolidated an open mentality towards research and verification, directed at introducing new directions in production, and experimenting with technology and materials.

The concurrent participation in cultural events was considered a stimulus to design and a vehicle for public relations; this was the motivation behind the *Table Light/Wall Light* project by the US team James Wines-Site, exhibited in the cultural section of the 1991 trade fair *Abitare il Tempo* in Verona: a room with an installation of 28 light sources, interpreted conceptually in the post-modern language of the American architects.

059

catalog cover and brochure,  
Rodolfo Dordoni, 1993



Organizational and logistical decisions characterized the year 1993. In May the operative headquarters left Murano, where only the administration remained, moving to Marcon in the province of Venice, a more convenient location for logistics management. Custom contract work had almost disappeared from the company's commissions and the process of *outsourcing* many functions was completed: graphics and public relations, design and product development were entrusted to independent consultants. The creation of a modern business structure, which had been consolidated thanks to the collaboration with Dordoni, was being definitively completed. This result in fact convinced Urbinati and Vecchiato of the need to widen the company's perspectives, to avoid being narrowly identified with a single designer, and to be more open towards other languages and experiences. An impervious itinerary, developed with many a contradiction, which in any case directed Foscarini towards continued growth and a stronger definition of its company identity.

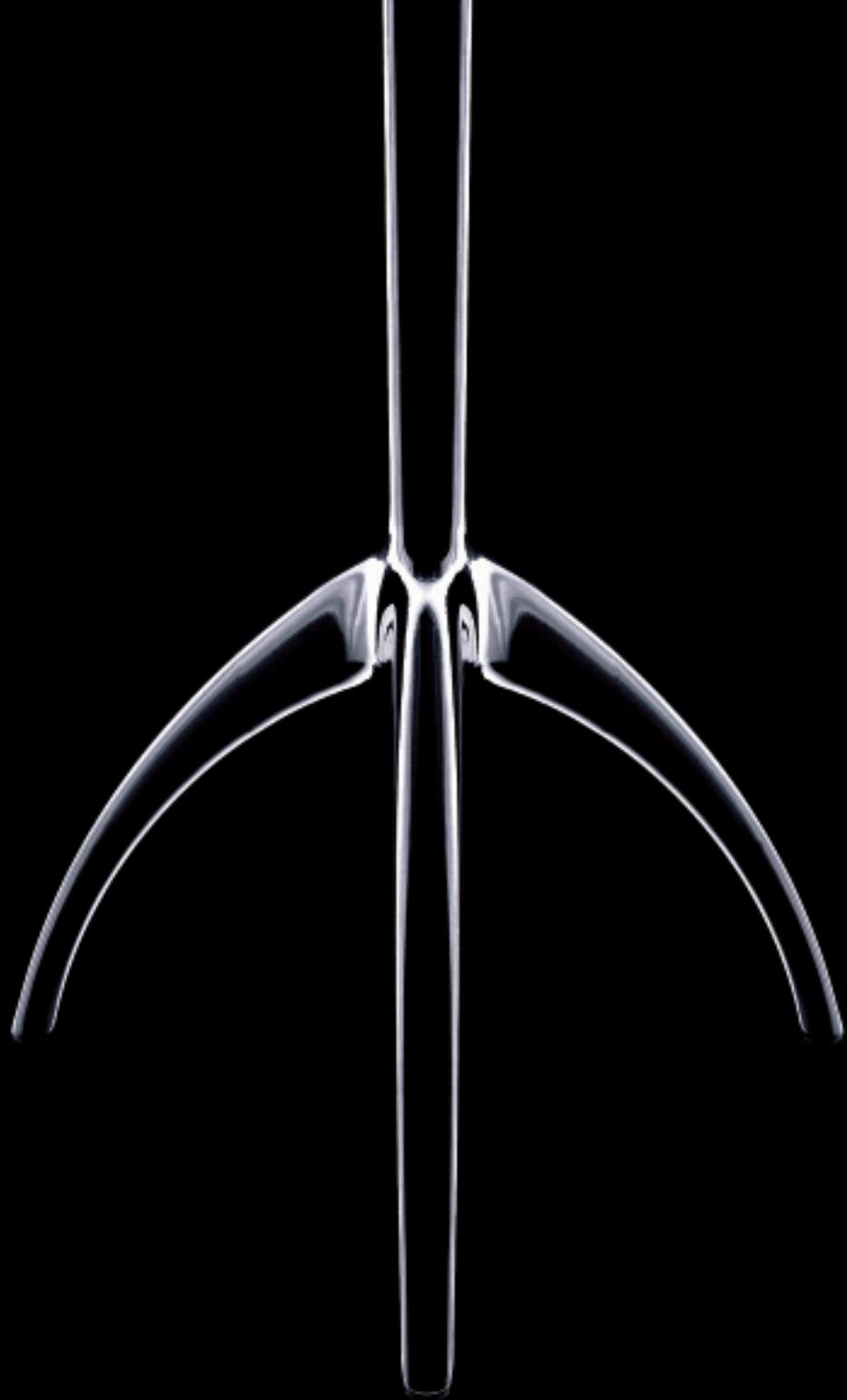


stand for Euroluce, Rodolfo Dordoni, 1989,  
detail of the new logo and a view of the  
stand; Euroluce, Rodolfo Dordoni, 1990

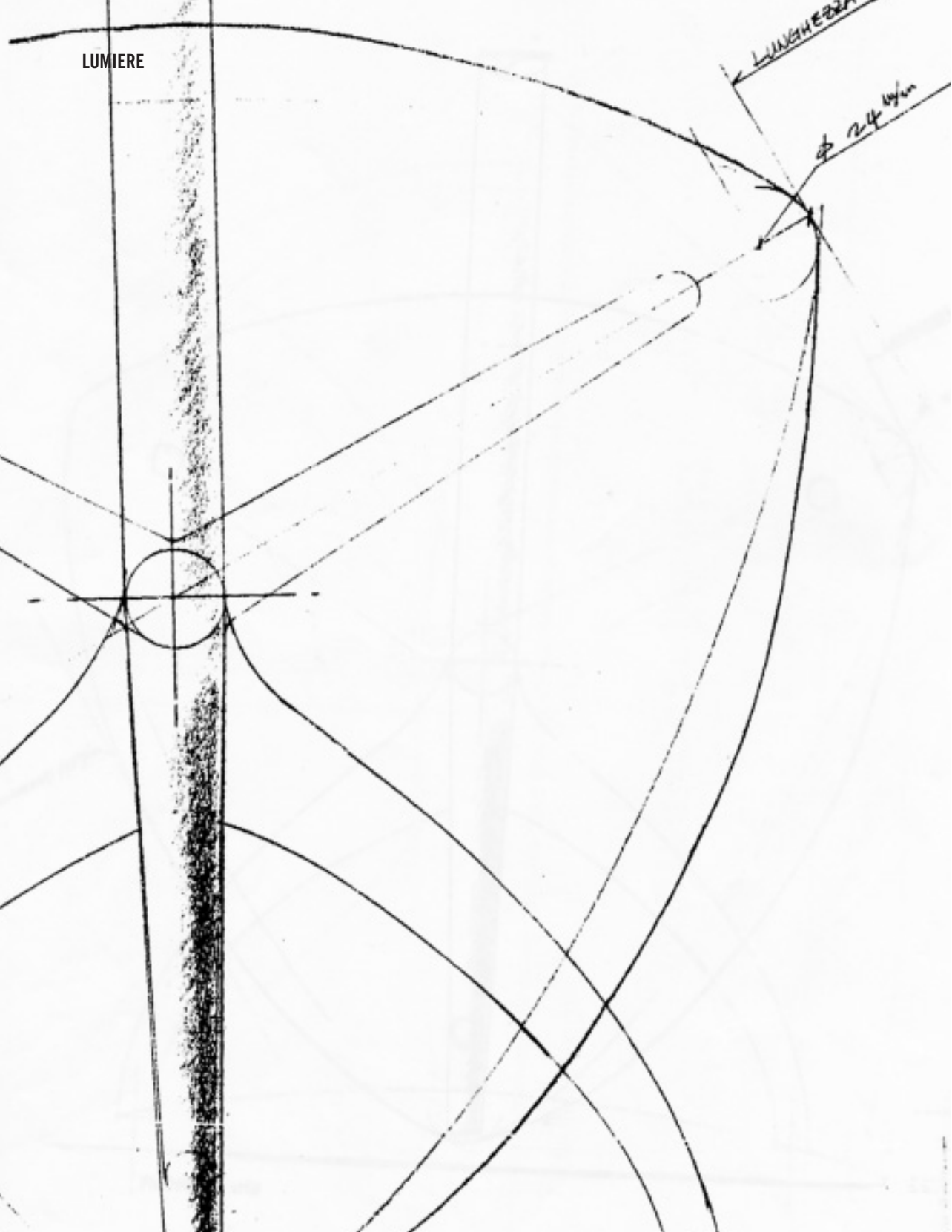




LAMPADE  
**LUMIERE**







## LUMIERE 1990

Rodolfo Dordoni



across:  
a study of the base of *Lumiere*, Rodolfo  
Dordoni, 1990

A reinterpretation of the classic table lamp with lampshade, Lumiere was designed by Rodolfo Dordoni in 1990. It is a fine example of one of the tendencies of contemporary design, to reinterpret the “forms of memory”: objects which are deeply rooted in their use and diffusion, whose reinterpretation appears quite recognizable and easy to accept. Dordoni captured this type of attention, forcing it in a technological direction with his metallic tripod solution and the new combination of materials.

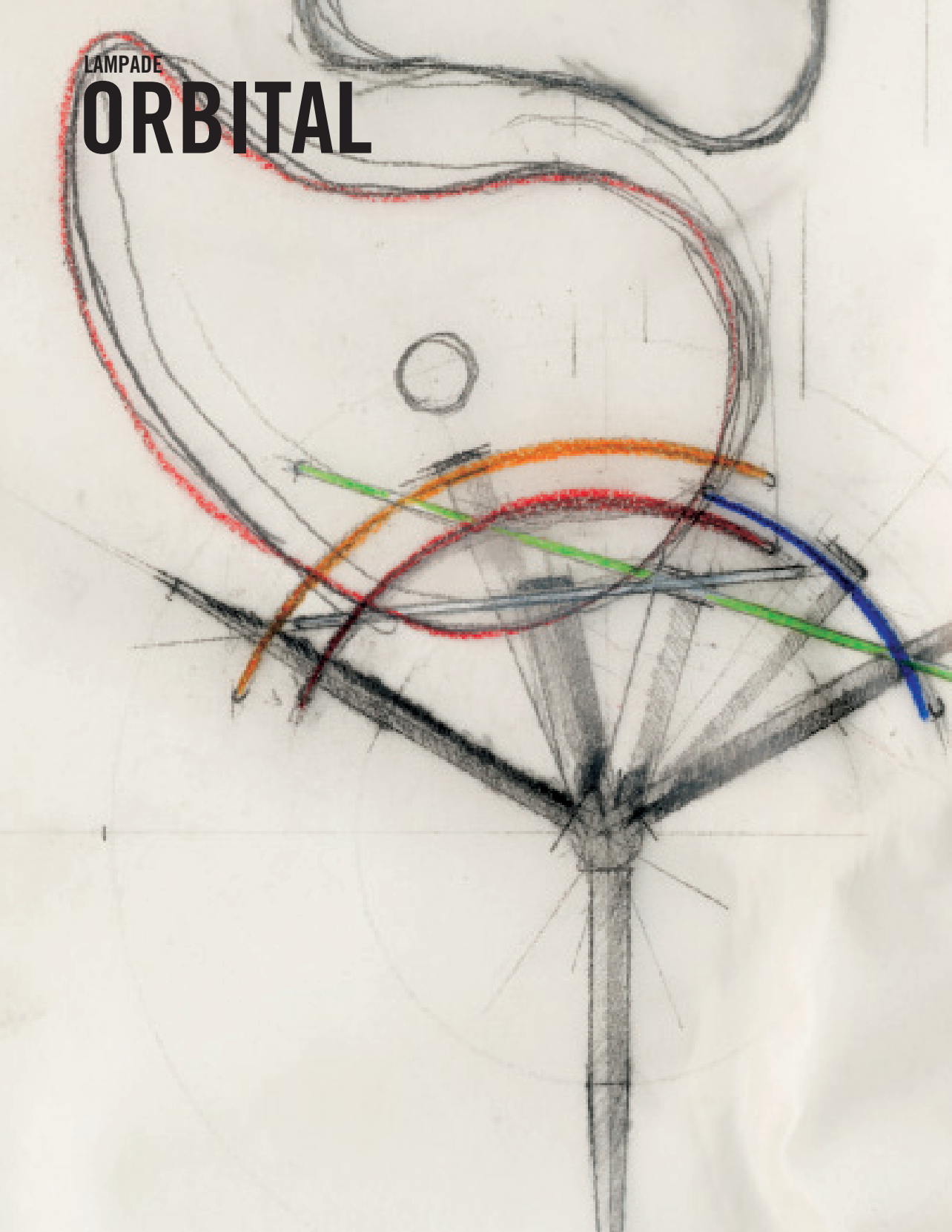
Still one of Foscarini’s top sellers, Lumiere is supported by a slender structure, at the top of which three incandescent bulbs are fastened one in front of the other to avoid casting shadows on the shade. The same tripod support, made in a single piece, die-cast in a special aluminum alloy, finished and polished by hand, gives stability to a slightly flared glass shade held by a simple screw at the top. Great care is taken to ensure the harmonious matching of two different materials. The choice of an essential form for the blown glass, acid-finished on the outer surface, is complemented by a careful study of colors to obtain diversified lighting effects: the inside layer remains white to favor reflection, whereas the outer layer becomes red to accent the light on the table top, or white, green or peach yellow for a diffused light in space. Lumiere was also declined in the floor and suspended versions, using the shade in an upside-down position. It documents the direction taken by

Dordoni in other models he created during those years, such as Fruits, Bijou, Buds and Blossoms, where the harmonious appearance derived from the successful proportioning between glass shades characterized by extreme formal simplicity and mountings boasting a distinctive design. In the history of Foscarini, Lumiere represents the symbol of an up-to-date design language brought in by the independent designers who began collaborating with the company, and contributed to improving the quality of the products and strengthening the brand impact.

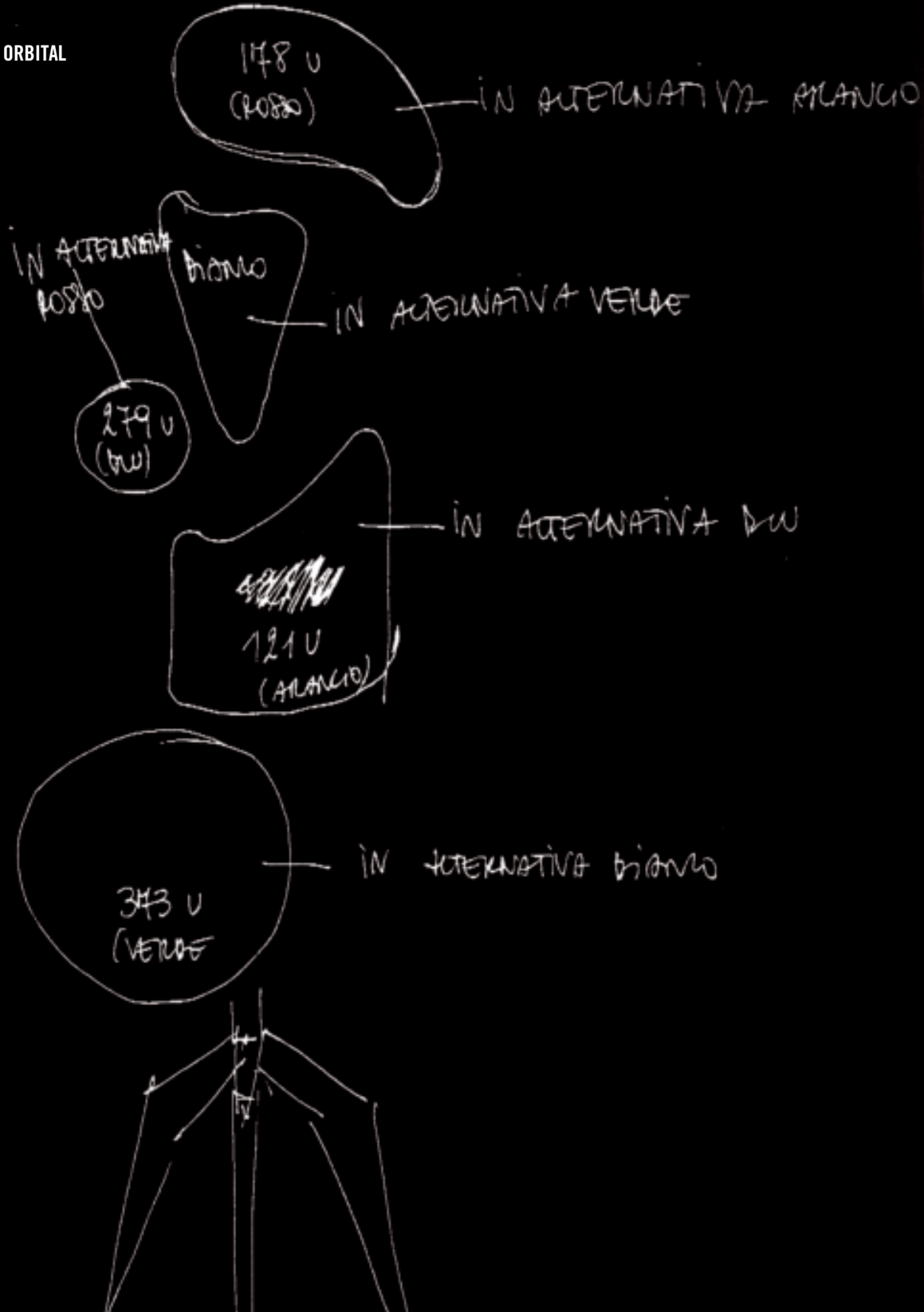


LAMPADE

# ORBITAL







**ORBITAL 1992**

Ferruccio Laviani



Orbital was Ferruccio Laviani's debut lamp. It marked Foscarini's first adoption of production materials other than Murano glass; but above all it constituted a long-standing icon which reinforced the company's image, particularly in the media. This was a lamp-object which represented a different idea of a light fixture, free from the requirements of technical performance to emphasize the evocative and emotional qualities of the product. A piece of sculpture, therefore, boasting a recognizable presence in space and characterized by the graphic sign which inspires the design of the glass panels. The designer in fact concentrated on the shape of the floor lamp and the relationship it creates with the surrounding environment, designing a lit object rather than a lighting device. "Finding the precise references that inspired the design of Orbital is not easy, says Laviani, there were probably many different principles. Perhaps the peculiarity of this project is that it was created from a sketch which never changed right through to the production of the lamp, and as far as I can remember, I think this is the only time that has ever happened to me."

The glass shades cut in different shapes, which initially were to be reminiscent of stained glass cathedral windows, were made out of industrial glass silk-screened in white or different colors, and satin finished on the outer surface. The polished inside surface allowed the shade to reflect light as well. By separating the arms of Orbital, the modular wall version called Bit was created in 1993. Orbital is one of the objects consecrated by a series of postage stamps on *Italian Design* emitted by the Italian Post Office in 2001. The tenth anniversary was celebrated with a special edition of the lamp featuring mirrored plate glass and polished chrome-finish metal structure and supports.

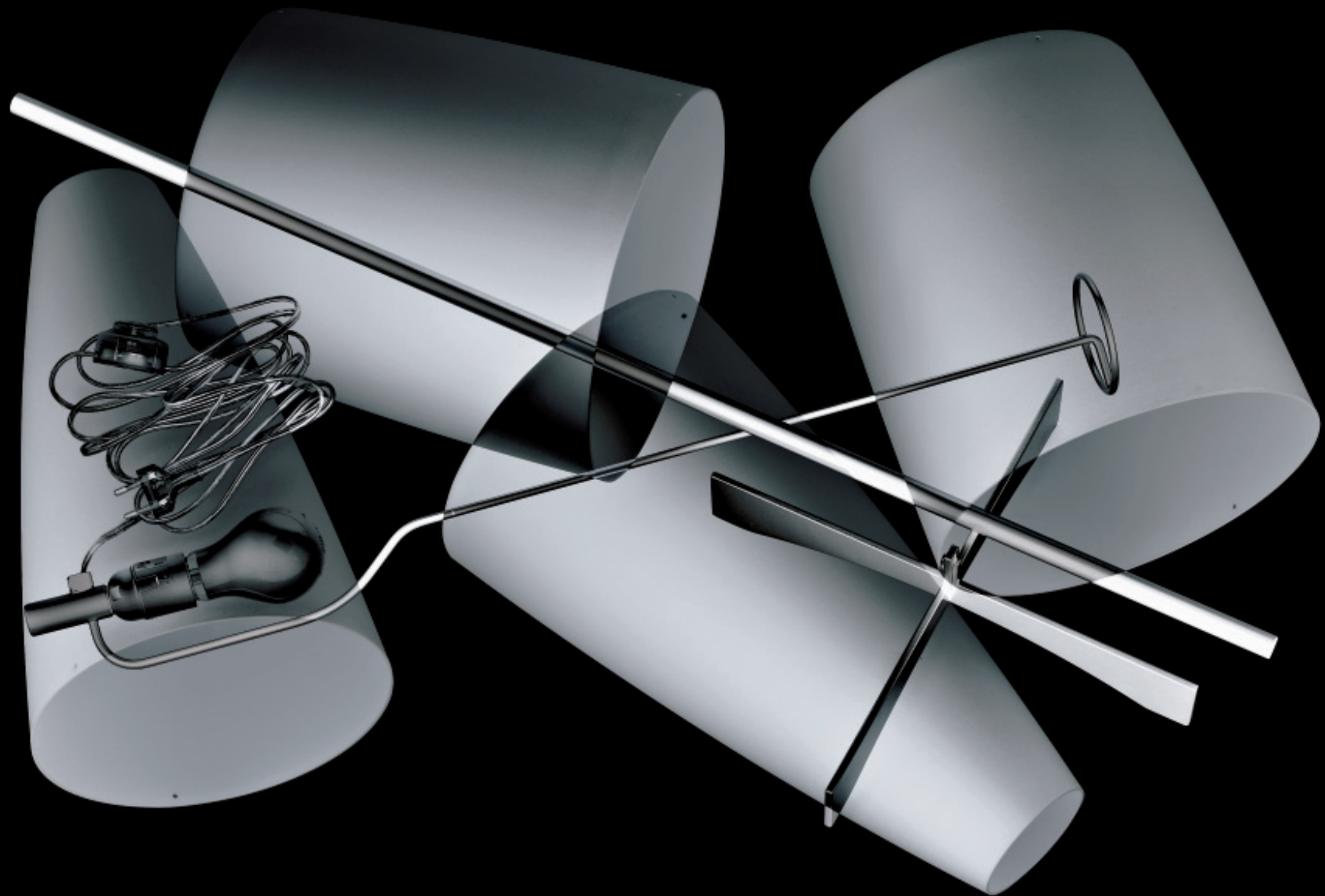
across:  
drawing with indications of the colors of the glass on *Orbital*, Ferruccio Laviani, 1992.  
in this page:  
prototype  
*Orbital* on italian postage stamp, 2001



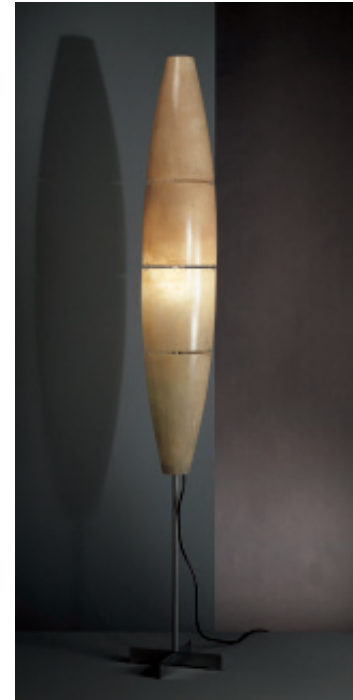
The fixture is made of a metal stem, coated with aluminum epoxydic powder paint, and supported by an adjustable tripod in laser-cut sheet metal, on which the five supports for the glass shades are soldered. The incandescent bulbs (40 watts each) are completely visible, becoming an integral part of the lamp's design.

LAMPADE  
**HAVANA**









p.74 and above:  
prototype for Havana  
across:  
drawing with a preliminary solution for the  
connection between the elements of the  
shade, Jozeph Forakis, 1993

## HAVANA 1993

Jozeph Forakis

Jozeph Forakis initially imagined Havana made out of glass with the profile of a cigar similar to the definitive one: a model created out of fiberglass documents the first design phase. Evaluations of the technical and economic feasibility of the fixture led to the exclusion of glass and the decision to use yellow polyethylene and transparent polypropylene, both self-extinguishing and recyclable materials, for the shade. Similar considerations determined the reduction of the pieces constituting the body of the lamp from the original five to the current four, to make the piece symmetrical and use only two forms for the molding.

The metal supporting parts were also reduced to a minimum in terms of number and sections. The four plastic volumes were hooked together and held apart by three metal “brackets”, whereas the slender supporting tube, which sustains the electric wire and holds the socket at the end – for an incandescent or energy-saving bulb – was soldered to a thin metal rod. It bends at the top to delineate the simple ring which, from the inside, keeps the entire shade suspended without being visible.

The foot was made of four intersecting blades cut by laser and finished, like the stem, in aluminum painted metal. For the first time, with Havana, Foscarini produced a lamp made out of plastic, a lightweight, mobile lamp which emanates diffused light, sports a youthful image, economical costs, and would quickly become popular thanks to

its flexibility and the ease with which it can be adapted to a variety of conditions and spatial contexts, in all its versions including the suspension and wall lamp. Havana is part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

IDEAS

# MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY



## MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY



glass processing in the furnace

The twenty-year history of Foscarini evinces a clear progression towards building the best correspondence possible between the design intentions and the choice of materials and construction techniques of the lighting fixture.

This research was developed parallel to the industrialization process of this company which made standard lamps as a complement to custom contract work. From its initial experience, it acquired not only a deeper understanding of the nature of glass, but also a number of contacts with suppliers specialized in a wide variety of techniques, maturing the idea of production without a factory. This particular decision proved over time to be functional to the different directions in design experimentation developed by Foscarini. It allowed the company to use different manufacturers depending on its needs; it stimulated continuous experimentation and careful attention to the manufacturing details of the fixture, from the shade to the supports, the mechanisms of the fasteners and the bulk of the electric wiring, even from a visual point of view. Their original specialization was in the design of standard lamps with shades in blown Murano glass: a study of the relationship between the light and its container, not a study of glass made beautiful by being lit. In the very first styles dating from 1982-83, Graphos and Refloz in particular, Urbinati and Vecchiato tried to force several constraints in the production technology, some of them a factor of consolidated habit. The formal simplicity, the diagonal cut, the bright colors with no nuances or decorations, deemed necessary for a correct relationship between material and source, in fact required particular manufacturing skill. At the same time they sought to emphasize typical techniques from Murano by measuring them against the theme of light, as in Rolli, where the interposition of glass made of parallel colored rods between the source and a reflecting surface generated precise graphic effects. The decor was no longer determined by methods of processing and producing glass, but became the result of a specific way to use the material in relation to light. Emblematic of their design approach was the lengthy study of the technique and later the mold for Plana, produced in 1984, whose shade featured an unusual shape reminiscent of a folded piece of paper. The intention to convey a special sense and value of weightlessness to the materials led them to experiment with different solutions for production: the hypothesis of casting it in hot glass was discarded in favor of pressed

**bàla de carta:** a mass of wet pressed paper which accompanies the glass shape while it is worked, holding the blowpipe horizontal and rolling it along the edge of the workbench.

**borséle:** jacks to shape the glass while hot

**bronzino:** the marver, a horizontal surface, now made of steel but once made of bronze, on which to roll the ball of glass attached to the blowpipe to shape it

**canna da soffio:** the blowpipe - a metal tube to blow the glass, like an incandescent soap bubble, free or into a mold.

**canna di vetro:** glass rod - from the basic glass the rod is obtained by pulling the ball in opposite directions

**colori:** colors - in Murano glass colors are obtained by adding different types of metal oxides

**crystallo:** transparent and colorless glass whose quality is determined by the purity of the raw materials, which must contain the smallest possible quantity of coloring oxides

**incalmo:** coupling, welding two hot pieces of glass whose edges are perfectly matched to obtain an object combining different colors or techniques

**incamiciato:** cased - glass made of two or more layers

**lattimo:** glass with a characteristic opaque quality and milky color given by the presence of microcrystals of calcium and sodium chlorides.

**levada:** consists in using the blowpipe to pick up the glass for processing by dipping it into the pot of glass

**maestro:** team leader of the "piazza" who gives orders and makes the operative decisions during processing

**magioso:** a wooden tool, consisting in a cylinder with a hemispheric cavity and a handle, helpful during the free-hand shaping of a piece

**mano volante:** flying hand - glass shaped

without the help of molds, using only jacks (borselle), wooden instruments (magiòssi), bàla de carta and other simple tools.

**momolo:** the glass ball, slightly elongated and ready for processing

**murrina:** small disk or cylinder obtained by pulling out a ball of glass made of successive layers of colored glass, whose section appears as a design of concentric forms

**opalino:** a semi-transparent milky glass with iridescent colors, obtained by adding crystals of lead arsenic.

**péa:** a more advanced phase of the mòmolo, where a pear shaped nucleus is ready for the definitive shaping by flying hand or in a mold

**piazza:** team, or minimal operative group in a furnace, three to eight people guided by a maestro

**pulegoso:** a semi-opaque glass full of tiny and irregular bubbles

**scagno:** the glassblower's work bench, around which the work of the piazza rotates

**sommerso:** glass with several polychrome layers, solid, processed and shaped while hot

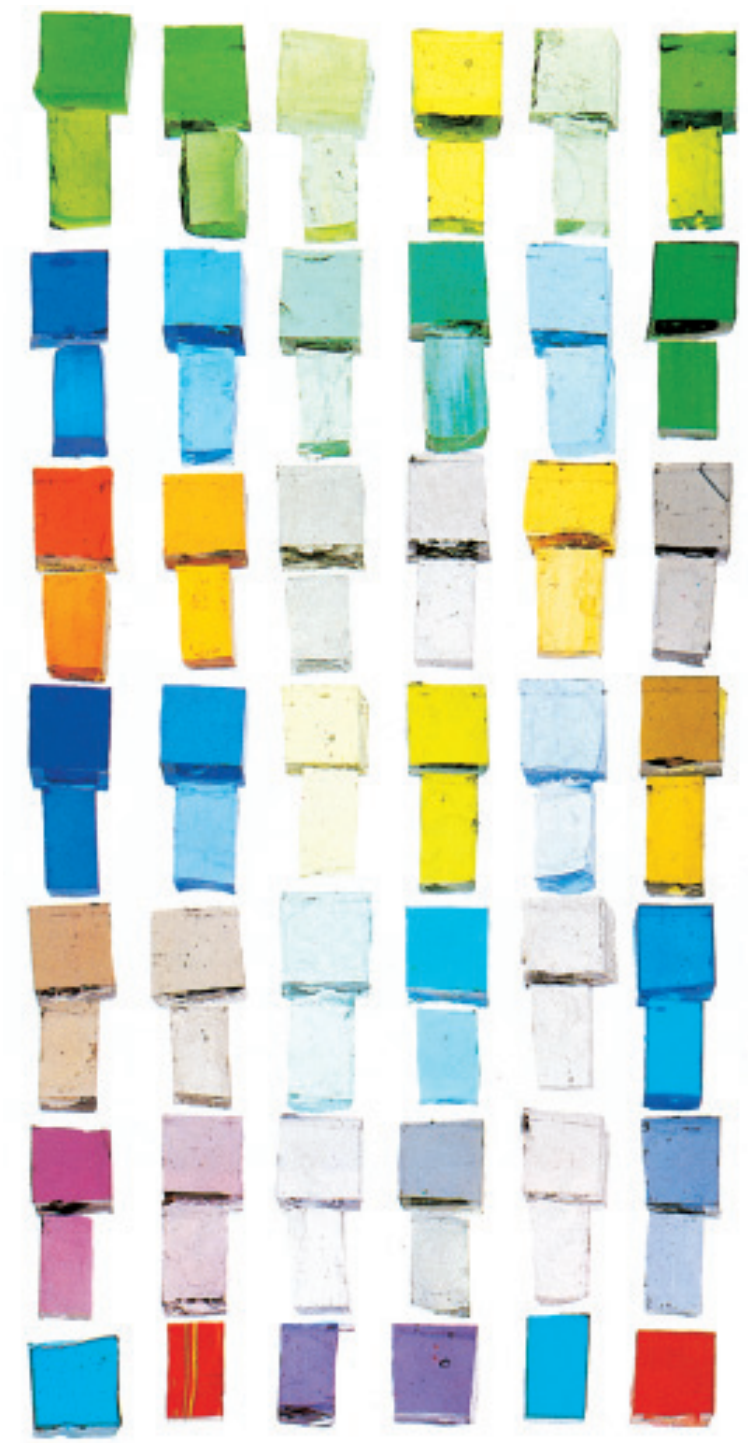
**stampo:** mold - normally characterized by a circular plan, made of wood or metal, it opens into two parts held together vertically along the half-section line, within which the péa is blown.

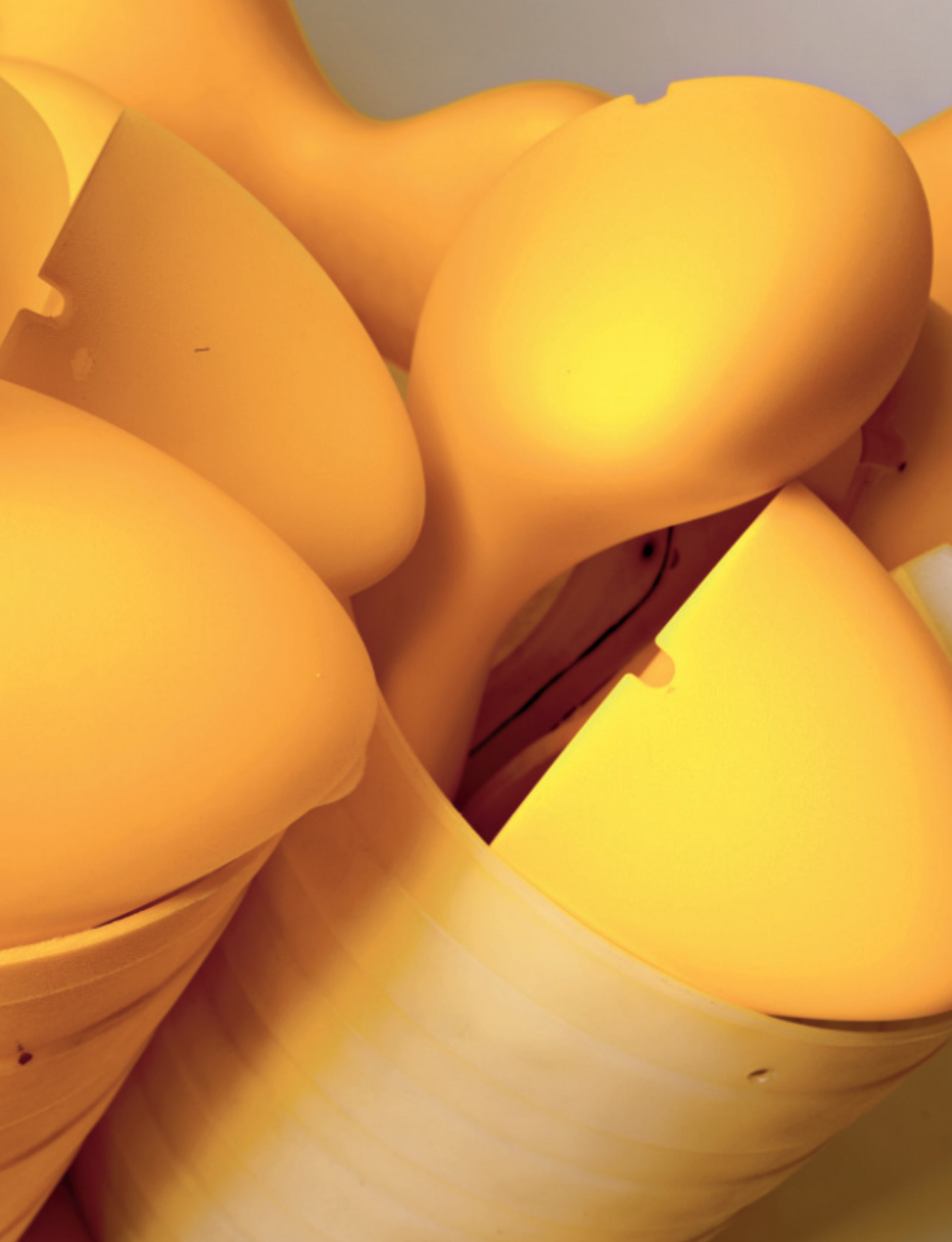
**stampo a fermo:** a non-circular mold, where the glass is blown with no possibility of rotating the piece.

**tagliante:** large scissors for cutting the incandescent glass.

**vetro:** glass - Murano glass is composed of 70% sand and silica with the addition of small quantities of carbon oxide, calcium carbonate, nitrates and arsenic. The fusion which takes approximately 9 hours, occurs in methane furnaces heated to 1400 degrees Centigrade, whereas the temperature during the processing is about 1000-1100 degrees Centigrade.

a sampler of glass colors





details of the *Blob* shades

glass, ending up with blown glass, for which they elaborated a wood mold which would produce two shades, to keep production time and material waste to a minimum. This model also called for a process of cutting and polishing which was unusual, at the time, for the glasshouses on the island.

A different design necessity for Floppi led to the adoption of thick pressed glass, of an almost industrial quality, using a manufacturer on Murano who usually produced it for more standardized functions. This was “glass suitable to make light”, focusing attention on the characteristics to apply to the object, from the consistency of the layers of material, to the tactile quality of the surface, to the appropriateness of the supports, to overall cost control.

Starting in the early Nineties, the attention towards new directions of research and design, combined with the curiosity for unexplored design solutions, found adequate support and the possibility for development in Foscari thanks to the articulated experimental and construction experience matured with glass and with a processing technique halfway between craft and industry; a labor methodology and operative process that could at this point be profitably applied to different materials and technologies.

This inclusion proved consonant with the direction of contemporary design, where technological factors constituted one of the most important fields of research.

In fact, the conditions were ripe to transfer applications to the domestic environment from fields that had traditionally been experimental.

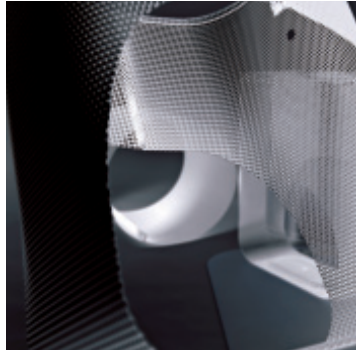
Over the years, Foscari had reinforced its own research and development structure and its technical division in relation to these demands; it chose, by hiring independent consultants, to employ more people in the study of materials, placing the accent on the entire life cycle of the product, from the selected light source to the duration of its constituent parts, to the bio-compatibility of the finish and the packaging. Models and prototypes were built in well equipped laboratories, further expanded in the new headquarters, where testing on materials was also conducted.

With the *Orbital* project in 1992, Foscari used silk-screened plate glass that was not produced on Murano for the first time; to make the tripod that supports it, they chose laser technology for the sheet metal.

An innovative technology that was new to the company as well, and was used again ten years later for the sections of the sphere in the *Supernova* suspension and in the shade-structure of *Rha+Thor*.

The road to plastics, on the other hand, was paved in 1993 with the polypropylene and the molded polyethylene (self-extinguishing and recyclable materials) used for the *Havana* shade. The material responded



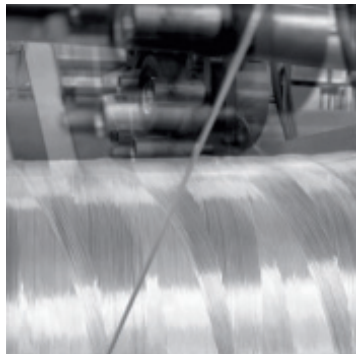


preceding pages:  
*Supernova*, Ferruccio Laviani, 2000  
at top:  
details of the metal mesh in *Bague*

well to the requirements for a lightweight lamp body, which would have a non-invasive, almost ethereal physical impact. Over two years of research was required to make *Mite*, a lamp produced in the year 2000, with a body in woven glass fibre wrapped in carbon or kevlar® fiber thread.

To produce a fixture which could adequately transmit the luminous flux, a suitable construction technology was found – roving – and a mold and appropriate form were slowly perfected. In recent years the experimentation of materials and technologies conducted by Foscarini has become quite significant; it begins with the specific requirements of the project, developed within a context dedicated to research and characterized by total freedom to use a variety of productive and technological resources.

To allow the electric wires, suitably insulated, to pass through the ring-shaped body of the *O-space* suspension, high density polyurethane foam was used, leaving the central circumscribed space totally and suggestively free; the technology of rotomoulding was experimented to produce *Blob*; and stretched metal mesh, covered in transparent silicone resin, served as both the supporting casing and the shade for the *Bague* table lamp, created in 2003.



processing of the composite material for the  
*Mite* shade  
next page:  
section and volume of *O-space*



**1994\_99**

**THE ROAD TO QUALITY**





## 1994\_99 THE ROAD TO QUALITY



across:  
packaging  
at top:  
catalog cover,  
Claudio Dell'Olio/Box<sup>2</sup>, 1996

At the end of the year 1993, Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato decided to bring the artistic direction and design decisions involving designers and products back within the company. This was not an easy decision to make but it proved necessary in order to accomplish a further step towards a more articulated and correct configuration of company strategy. The result of the recently concluded experience with Rodolfo Dordoni was undoubtedly positive, but in the end priority was given to building a specific identity; the decision to work with a design language that would return to essential, minimal and elementary forms appeared to be a possible direction.

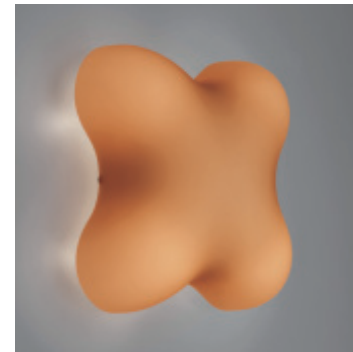
The collaboration with Piero Lissoni was intended to mark a change in direction towards blown glass styles conceived with no frills: hence the creation in 1994 of Cap, Flat and Basic, a suspension lamp featuring a counterweight, where the support and shade were both white, presented with three extremely simple shapes of glass; two years later came Bugia.

In the meantime a number of relationships with designers called into the company by Dordoni were being consolidated. The change in direction also affected the new catalog designed in 1996 by Claudio Dell'Olio from the Milan studio Box<sup>2</sup>. The publication was characterized by the friendly image of the product illustrations, photographed by Santi Caleca lit within domestic settings, the cover in brochure, simply stapled and conceived for widespread distribution, the descriptive technical information composed on pastel-colored pages which varied with the different types of lamps.

This school of thought, which was particularly interested in contemporary shapes of blown glass in warm colors which could create a soft embracing light, provided a framework for the contribution by Defne Koz, who demonstrated great sensitivity in Circus first and later in Dress, constructing smooth shades with almost invisible supports. Or the initial experiences of Valerio Bottin with Double and Vitt, where he modeled volumes that appear as the precursors of the successful Cross designed in 1998, a suspension lamp with a large satin-finished glass shade blown into a still mold, and studied to emit diffused light downwards and concentrated light upwards.

The same designer was responsible for the Totem floor lamp, which combined three shades in satin-finished polyethylene with independent switches.

And Prospero Rasulo, who designed first Alcea then Qua in 1998, a sort of soft glass four-lobed cushion for the ceiling or wall; in Caliz, by Lievore Asociados, the supporting stem of the floor lamp was made of dark wood or aluminum. Alex Hochstrasser in his Hoc suspension connected a continuous



across, from top clockwise:  
*Basic*, Piero Lissoni, 1994;  
*Euroluce* stand design, Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato, 1996;  
*Cross*, Valerio Bottin, 1998;  
*Caliz*, Lievore Asociados, 1997

from top:  
*Zen*, Roberto Palomba  
and Ludovica Serafini, 1996;  
*Qua*, Prospero Rasulo, 1998;  
*Elfo*, Denis Santachiara, 1999

white glass form with an upside down bowl and a flared cylinder that concentrated light downwards; the designs by Roberto Palomba and Ludovica Serafini began with *Zen*, which imprisoned a white glass cylinder within a wooden tripod support, and continued with *Dom*, an experiment in the process of hand grinding industrial multiples.

The styles multiplied, expanding the selection significantly. But there was no single programmed design direction, and throughout those years, Foscarini considered many different design languages, developing each of them with the materials and construction solutions it deemed best for each one.

After *Orbital*, still one of Foscarini's best known icons, Ferruccio Laviani designed *Dolmen*, an aluminum box made to frame the light, which was graphically outlined by four large holes, enclosed at the front and the back by plastic panels.

The theme of redesigning the Venetian chandelier led Tom Dixon to design the *Lightweight* collection, sculptural models with eight arms built out of thin metal rods. The *Elfo* table lamp, dated 1999, represented a taste of the magical-ludic direction impersonated by Denis Santachiara: an unexpected hologram gives visibility on the surface and an illusion of tangibility to the little lamp-worked glass figures placed inside the shade. This completed a process initiated at the beginning of the decade, activating, for example, a procedure to monitor claims, whose purpose was to achieve a "system" of overall company quality, from the organization of labor to customer satisfaction control. In 1996 Foscarini decided to pursue the UNI EN ISO 9001 certification. This move represented a decision to focus on a series of key issues for the company, though not entirely relevant yet to the final consumer, which would add new "qualities" to the creation of an industrial design company identity.

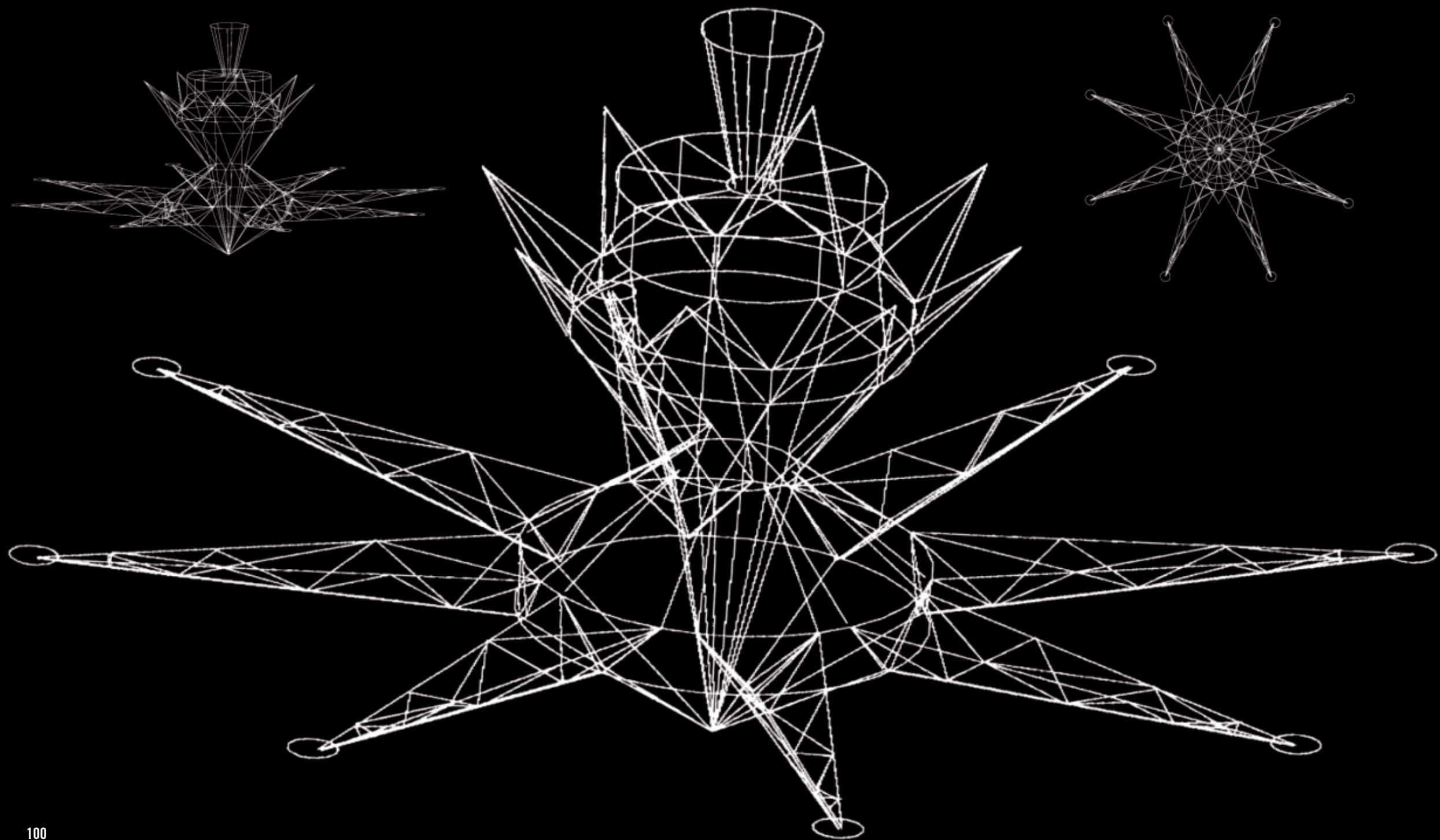
The expansion of the distribution network and the variety of the selection resulted in a consistent increase in the volume of sales; acting upon the conclusions of a poll conducted by a research institute on its retail points in 1999, the company decided to specifically sustain the Foscarini brand name, which was not always adequately recognized or associated with a specific product.

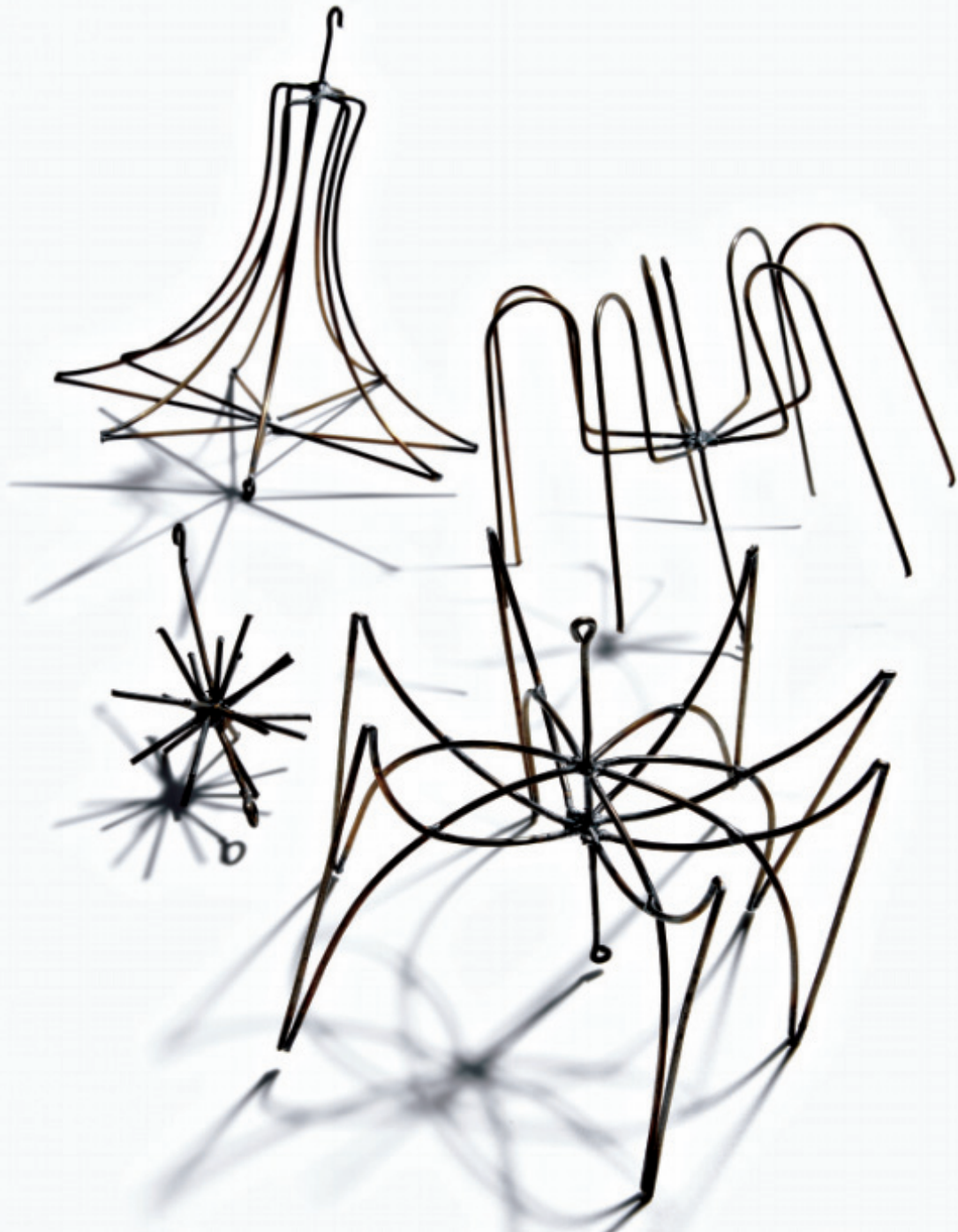
In consideration of these elements, the decision was made to entrust communication, public relations and graphic design to the Attila agency in Milan, which was specialized in the field of fashion.

This option, which came as the result of a complex series of considerations, presented rather exciting perspectives for the idea of self-promotion by association with the most vital areas of Italian design, but posed a problem because of its progressive departure from the company's focus on industrial design.

LAMPADE  
**LIGHTWEIGHT**







previous pages:  
 rendering, Tom Dixon, 1994  
 across and at top:  
 prototypes from the Lightweight collection,  
 1995

**LIGHTWEIGHT 1995**

Tom Dixon

In his Lightweight collection in 1995, Tom Dixon explored the theme of lighting rooms from a central lighting source, an area of research that the company had pursued in the early Nineties with the Venice Collection by Patrice Butler.

In the wake of his personal experimentation with the spatial potential of thin metal rod structures which had already led to other furniture projects in 1991, the designer created four different chandelier designs, reinterpreting the classical arm configuration and modularity of the Venetian models.

Made out of metal painted yellow, red, blue or dark grey, they were all supplied with small shades in blown white glass, satin-finished to avoid glare, hosting low-tension halogen sources.

Three of the variations were diversified in the profile of the arms and could be hooked together by their stems thanks to a ring and a ball joint built with spikes, whereas the fourth formed a complex trestle.

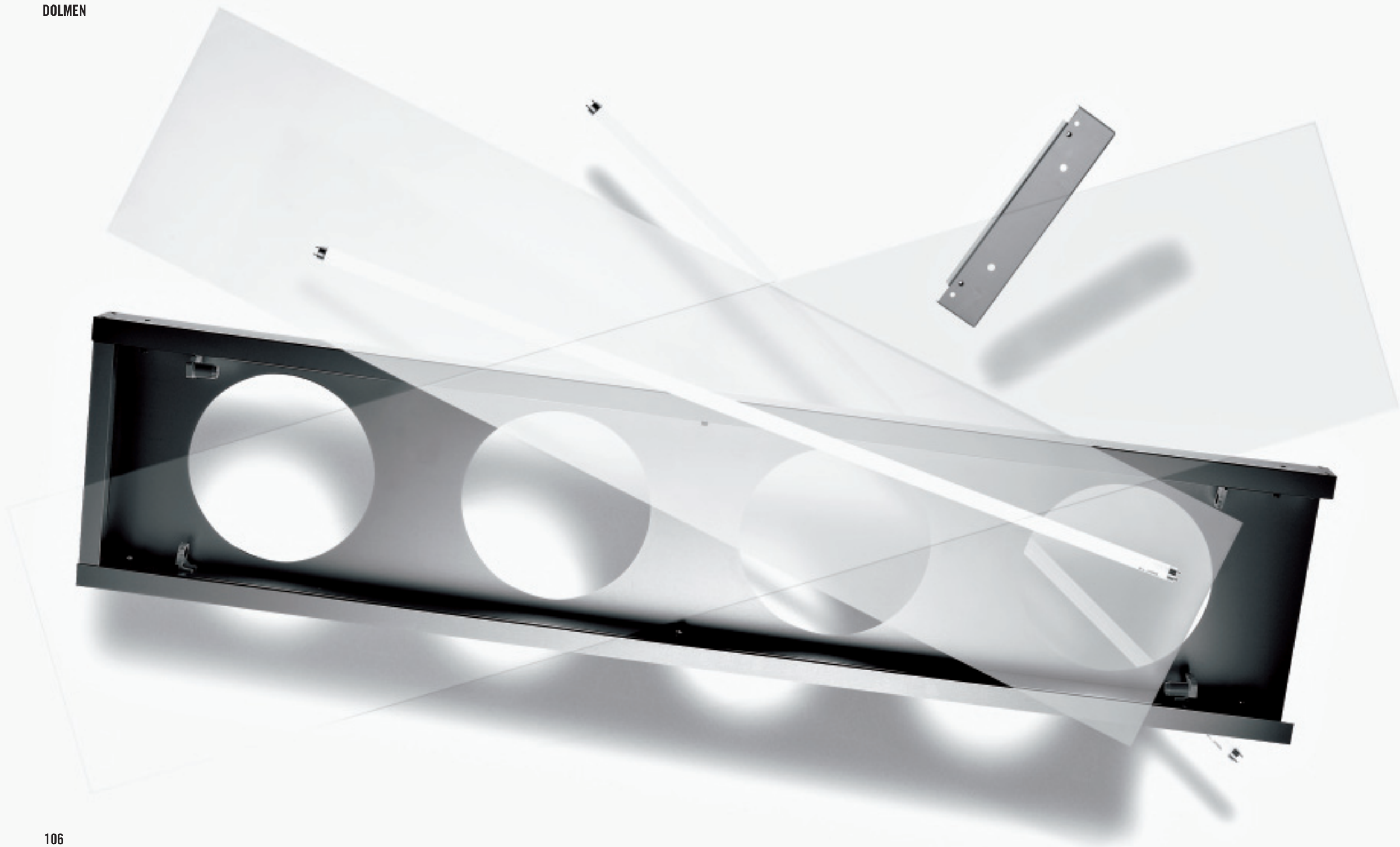
This last chandelier, which reached a diameter of 120 cm, developing eight arms on its base, was constituted by approximately one hundred linear elements hand-soldered to compose a frame. This is the only piece still in production, in a polished gray zinc finish.

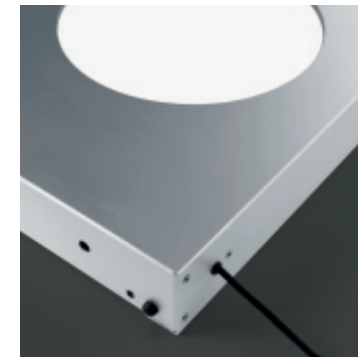
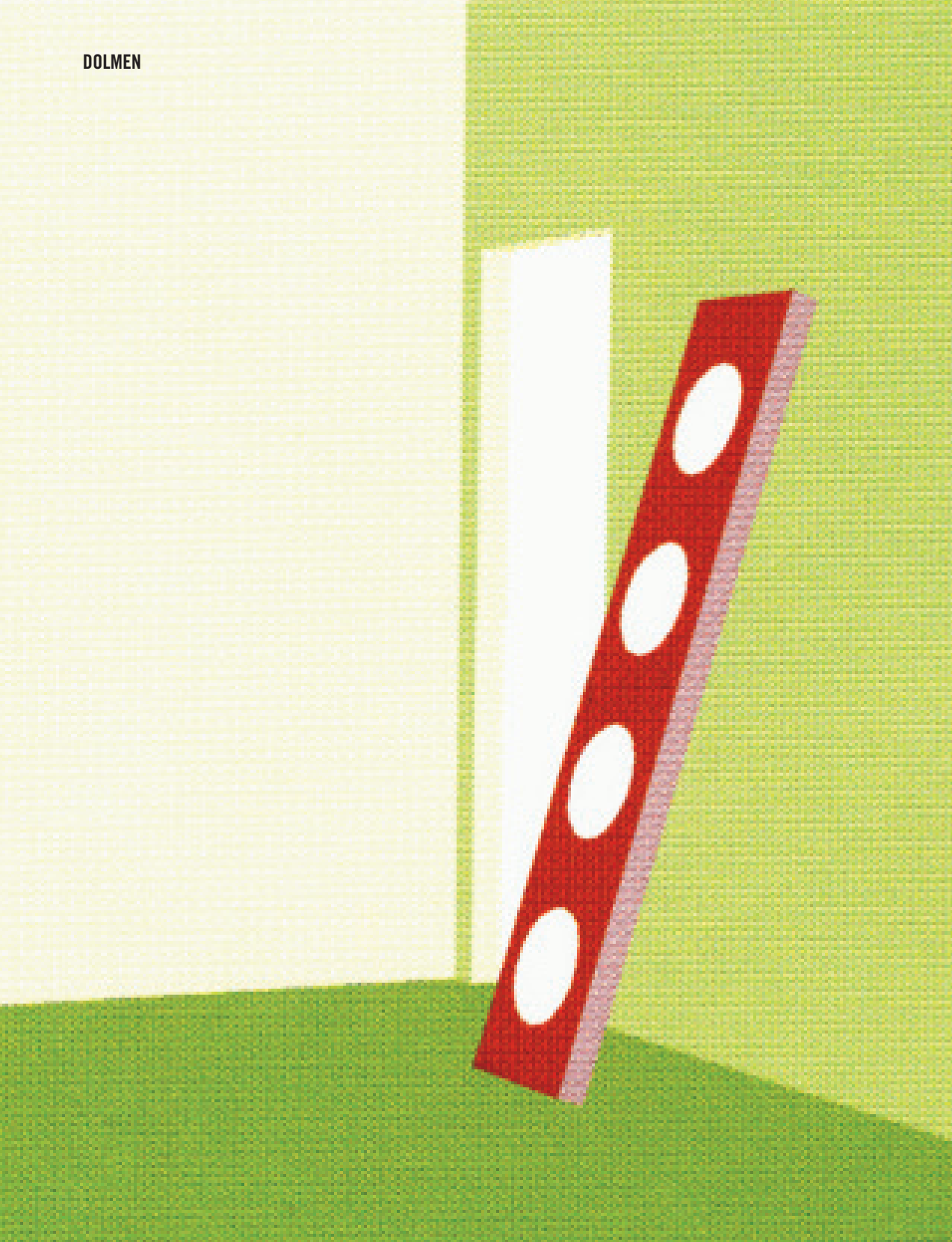
Lightweight was an anomalous but significant product for Foscarini. Anomalous in its identification with semi-handcrafting production methods, which the company's versatility allowed it to confront and respond to; significant

because it dialogued with an interesting concept of design, strongly characterized by visual impact, which lay within the contemporary culture of the design project.

LAMPADE  
**DOLMEN**







across:  
rendering, studio Laviani, 1996  
at top:  
details of *Dolmen*, 1996

## DOLMEN 1996

Ferruccio Laviani

180 cm tall and 40 cm wide, Dolmen is a narrow and lightweight parallelepiped designed to lean against walls, stand up or lay down, or hang on the ceiling in multiple installations. Essential in its constituent parts, it is composed of an aluminum "box" which contains and amplifies the effect of the two fluorescent (energy saving) light sources through two screens in polycarbonate lexan, white in the front and transparent in the back. The four holes are of equal diameter, and characterize the frontal plane, generating an alternation of opaque and luminous surfaces which discreetly diffuse the light. The back screen fulfills the task of lighting, exploiting the walls of the room as a reflecting surface. Even the superficial treatment of the shell, coated in epoxydic powder paint in the orange version (no longer in production), brushed and anodized in the natural aluminum version, emphasizes the graphic matrix of Laviani's project, a constant feature of his design. Dolmen embodied Foscarini's idea of a flexible lamp which could be adapted to many different types of use, especially in its original lean-on-the-wall configuration; an interesting and early approach towards the multi-functionality of the object, which has undoubtedly become one of the central issues of contemporary design. Just as significant was the return to the linguistic and visual spirit of the Sixties, which would arouse considerable interest.



LAMPADE  
**DRESS**





# DRESS

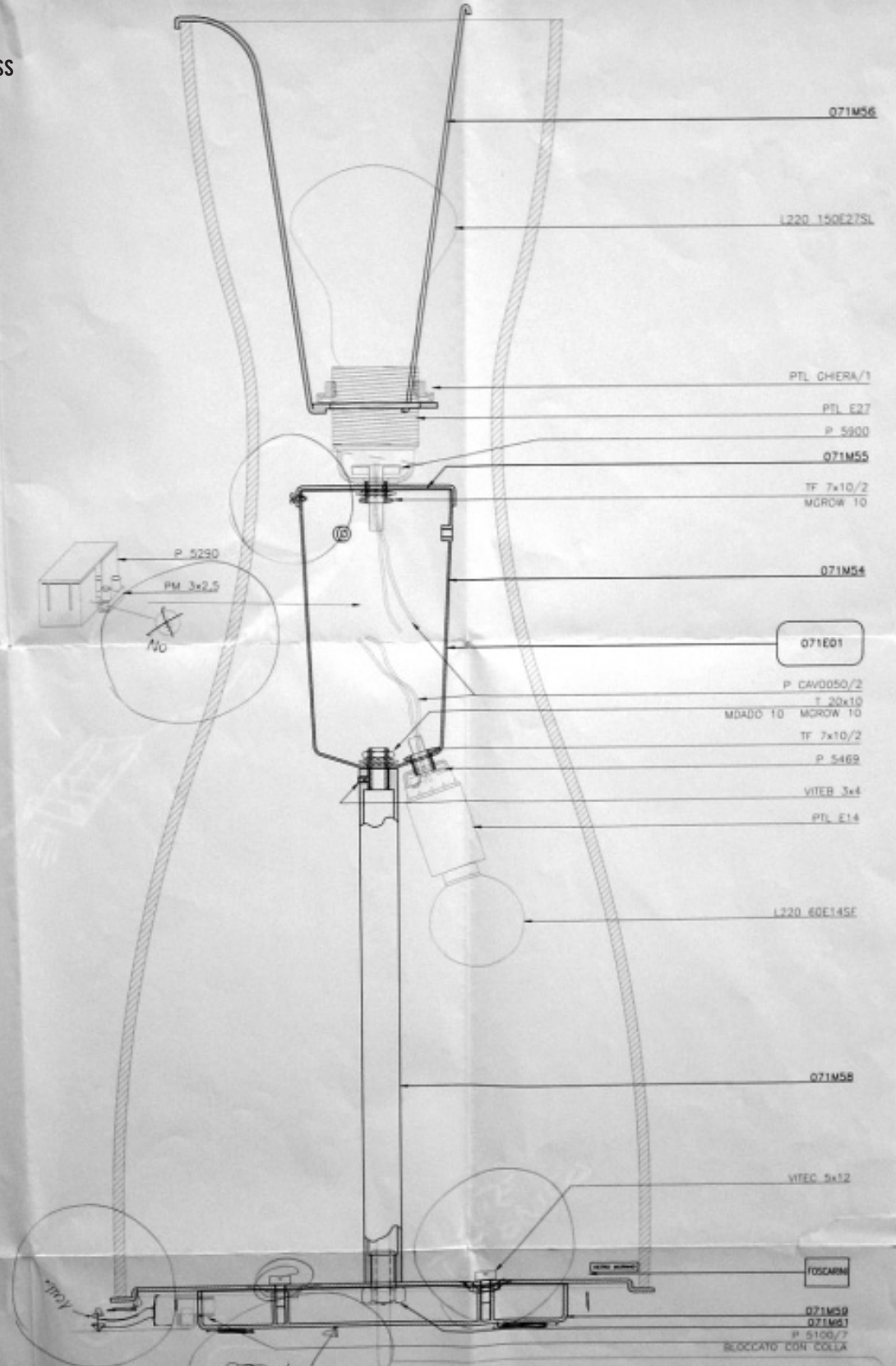
## DRESS 1996

Defne Koz

“My purpose, states Defne Koz, is to create everyday objects that can communicate emotion, that can continue to astound. This is why my design language follows no single style or fashion trend. It lasts over time, is simple but not banal, and is innovative in its choice of materials and formal typologies.” Dress, the table lamp designed in 1996 and still in production today, embodies this approach to the design project. Koz designed a large blown glass, the largest version is 61 cm high and 26 cm in diameter, by lightly squeezing the shape of a cylinder. To keep it perfectly integral, with no holes, a custom mechanism to fasten the shade onto the structure was invented. With its extremely simple shape, Dress diffused light through its double glass layers, white on the inside, peach yellow or white on the outside, featuring a double switch: three incandescent (or energy-saving) bulbs were positioned downwards, and one was pointed towards the ceiling, integrating the luminous flux with partially reflected light. The surface was satin-finished with an acid treatment of the glass to prevent fingerprints, and the shade was fastened to an almost invisible base in stainless steel and metal coated with white epoxy powder paint. The series included a smaller table lamp and a floor lamp supported by a thin stem. Dress was an excellent example of the attempt to keep the design and production tradition of blown glass still vital, interpreting it in a soft, simple and reassuring language.



across:  
working drawing for *Dress*, Foscarini technical division, 1996



IDEAS

# QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

FOSCARINI

FOSCARINI

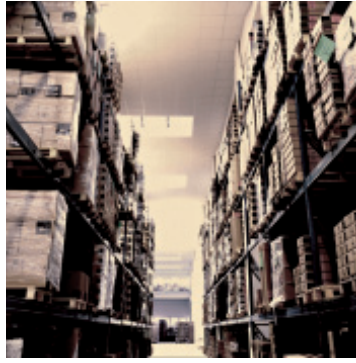


quality control of a product

## QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

To invest in the consolidation of a precise identity profile means to initiate a long-term strategy, made of corrective actions and constant testing of the process, characterized by global quality and customer satisfaction, elements which are becoming increasingly relevant and decisive for the success of the company. The quality issues in a company involve compliance with safety standards for products, and the guarantee that company processing responds to pre-established parameters. As far as lighting fixtures are concerned, the safety standards are different in each of the countries where the product is exported. Since 1992, Foscarini has modified its production to conform to the IMQ quality trademark in Italy, the VDE in Germany, the UL in Canada and the USA. It decided to have its lamps tested in its own laboratories and in independent institutes, and to comply with the most restrictive dispositions, such as the American standards. As far as “company quality” is concerned, Foscarini began with the institution of a mechanism to monitor claims in 1990, creating a system of quality control; it was one of the first Italian companies in the field of lighting to be certified in 1996 by UNI EN ISO 9001 (which later became Vision 2000). The ENEC trademark certified that it responded to the requisites for both safe products and guarantee of company quality. A company plan defined responsibilities, qualifications, procedures and resources and subjected them to control.

The company quality plan did not consider the final consumer and the product user as the exclusively interested parties, but included the employees, suppliers and retailers. The methods and procedures that were monitored involved the entire company; on one hand, the commercial division, purchasing, assembly and delivery of materials, for the standard catalog products; on the other hand, marketing, design and development of new products and limited editions. A quality control of the process involving all the different phases in the development of the lamps, from the design to the sale. This meant that Foscarini could guarantee the retailer, and therefore the final consumer, that the product responded to a series of requisites: design and functionality above all; safety thanks to its total compliance with standards; conformity to all that was specifically declared in the use of components, materials and assembly processes for the life of the product. These decisions involved investments in the continuous professional training of the personnel, followed by a close collaboration with suppliers, and finally the institution of a series of tests on the product during the phases of processing within the company (acceptance and production). Attention also had to be paid to the



view of the stock aisles and detail of instruments for quality control of the product  
next page:  
details of the packaging

working environment and conditions, and specific care taken to check the precision of measuring instruments, materials, packaging technology, shipping logistics. Obviously, all of the above was strictly functional to the improvement of the company's efficiency but also to the satisfaction of the customer who purchased the lamps.

The consumer is undoubtedly the central figure on the market, and especially over the past decade, the propensity towards purchasing seems connected to a growing culture of service which one would like to recognize in products and in the places that sell them. This implies a process of transformation for the company, which must become client-oriented and progressively build an organizational structure which is capable of understanding the consumer's present and future needs, and satisfying his requisites while trying to anticipate his expectations. "To grow, writes sociologist Giampaolo Fabris, a company needs a satisfied consumer. The creation of consumer loyalty is becoming a crucial factor in business strategy. The best way to create loyalty is by guaranteeing the complete satisfaction of the customer's needs". The decision to invest primarily in the constant improvement of the various phases of the company process and the relationship with the public has become increasingly strategic over time for Foscarini. "Customer satisfaction, confirms Fabris, thus becomes a primary objective. And indeed the most profitable investment a company can make".



**2000\_03**  
**DESIGN AS**  
**INNOVATION**

## XIX Premio Compasso d'Oro ADI

**Tite e Mite**  
Lampade

**Marc Sadler**  
Designer

**Foscarini Murano srl**  
Produttore

## Compasso d'Oro

### Giuria

Maria-Laure Joussef, *Presidente*  
Filippo Alison  
François Burkhardt  
Omar Calabrese  
Francisco Jarauta  
Maurizio Morgantini  
Erik Spiekermann

15 Ottobre 2001

## 2000\_03 DESIGN AS INNOVATION



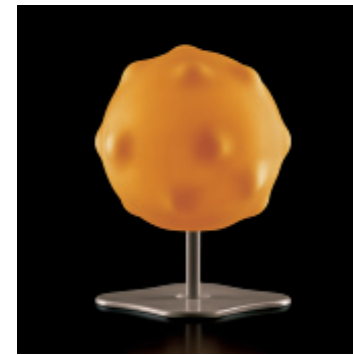
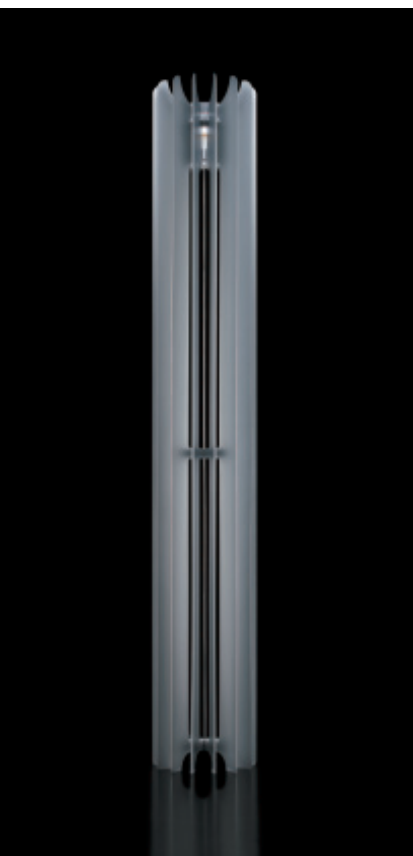
across:  
certificate of the Compasso d'oro-ADI, 2001  
at top:  
*Mite*, Compasso d'oro-ADI, 2001, advertising  
page

At the turn of the millenium Foscarini appeared as a lighting design company whose strength lay in the pursuit of design, production and marketing quality.

Over time a decision-making mechanism was consolidated for projects presented by and solicited from designers, evaluated by a selection committee which included a range of qualifications, before being entrusted to the technical division. This structure increasingly acquired the connotations of a research and development core, with both employees and independent consultants dedicated specifically to research on materials: as a group they were responsible for engineering the product – from the technical drawings to the compliance with standards, and the construction of prototypes using a models and materials testing laboratory.

The image and communication strategy for the year 2000 was directed at the public and the general press, with a campaign organized by Attila: in addition to the *Foscarini fashion light* catalog, illustrated with images by Ruy Teixeira, Laura Rizzi, Fabio Meazzi and Renai&Renai, and the advertising pages outlined with silhouettes by Maddalena Sisto, it culminated with a “light fashion show”, an event held in Milan during EuroLuce 2000. The strategy, whose intent was to create a dialogue with the dynamics of the world of fashion, appeared interesting though in some cases incongruent with the baggage of experience and the development perspectives of Foscarini. The collaboration with Attila thus ended in 2001, and a new set of references for communication and visual design were identified: Artemio Croatto of Designwork in Udine was chosen as the visual designer, and public relations were entrusted to Silvia Rizzi and the Ergo agency. The logo designed by Dordoni in 1989 was re-proportioned and in April 2002 the new catalog was printed, with the focus once again on design. The rhythm of its perusal, with a double black and grey page to introduce the different types of fixtures, is ordered in each single lamp by the succession, respectively, of images in a setting, details and the entire product, photographed by Massimo Gardone/Azimut in collaboration with Ruy Teixeira. The concept for photographs and text, characterized by distinct chiaroscuro to accent the three-dimensional nature and the luminous effects of the fixtures, is appropriate for the rigorous composition and strong color palette, often used in wide flat fields on which the images, treated as graphic signs,





across, from top clockwise:  
*Supernova*, Ferruccio Laviani, 2000;  
*Bubble*, Valerio Bottin, 2000;  
*Blob*, Karim Rashid, 2002;  
*Thor*, Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai, 2001;  
*O-space*, Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai, 2003

from the top:  
*Lampoon*, Aldo Cibic, 2002;  
*Lenin*, Ferruccio Laviani, 2001;  
*Yet*, Studio Kairos, 2003

are applied. In addition to the exhibition design, the same expressive language is declined in two recent instruments of company communication: the web site and “Lux” magazine, a newly created cultural exploration on the theme of light, which covers different fields of interest from design to art, science and technology.

This three year period was characterized by a greater awareness of the need to identify the character, the language and the productive development of the light fixtures. Using prevalently blown glass, where research into the potential of the material and the processing techniques was stimulated, for example, by involving Aldo Cibic. The Cocò and Lampoon lamps, conceived as part of a family, explore original construction techniques for the glass shade. Ferruccio Laviani, with his sophisticated Lenin table lamp, modulates the luminous flux through a shield in polished stainless steel which moves up and down an elliptical transparent blown glass volume.

The experimentation with plastics, begun in 1993 with Havana, continued with the use of materials and technology often borrowed from other fields of production, adapted to light design. Thus Mite, and its matching collection Tite, Lite and Kite, designed by Marc Sadler and winner of the Compasso d’oro-ADI 2001 award, derives from the processing of glass fabric combined with the carbon or kevlar® fiber used for fishing rods or golf clubs.

These are objects whose design also explores previously unknown territory for the field. O-space by Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai is a shell constituted by a sandwich of high-density polyurethane foam, in which a copper tube containing the electric wires is embedded. Thus the supply devices and the light source are totally concealed from sight by the shape of the container. Valerio Bottin with Bubble reflects on the definition of a spherical suspension lamp which diffuses the light in a uniform fashion, using six equal diffuser elements made of polycarbonate and held together by a ball joint in chrome-finished metal.

Blob by Karim Rashid was created using rotation moulding technology, an innovative and economical system of shaping polypropylene, and in its larger version it becomes a chair, inaugurating an alternative domestic use, indoors and outdoors, of a lighting device. Studio Kairos studied the same functional duplicity with Yet, a modular lamp-shelf which lights up completely using a single fluorescent source. Created in molded polycarbonate, colored and satin-finished, it features ribbing which gives it rigidity and creates a graphic pattern on the surface. Other fixtures create a dialogue between luminous atmospheres and metal shades, like the Supernova by Laviani, a suspension lamp composed of a theory of thin parallel laser-cut disks in stainless steel or aluminum, which are

below:  
catalog cover, Attila, 2000;  
catalog cover, Artemio Croatto/  
Designwork, 2003

next page, from top clockwise:  
event in Milan, 2000;  
Euroluce stand design, Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato, 2001;  
stand design for Euroluce, Artemio  
Croatto/Designwork, 2003, views

assembled to reconstruct the volume of a sphere. “The main concept of Supernova, states the designer, was to make a lamp which created a large volume, but with a weight and packaging that did not make it “difficult”. That was why I thought of disks that could be assembled to create the volume I wanted. The spheres intersect with others that empty its volume, creating an optical design which is reminiscent of the design objects of the Sixties and Seventies. The particular shape of the disks which compose the lamp make an excellent light diffusion.”

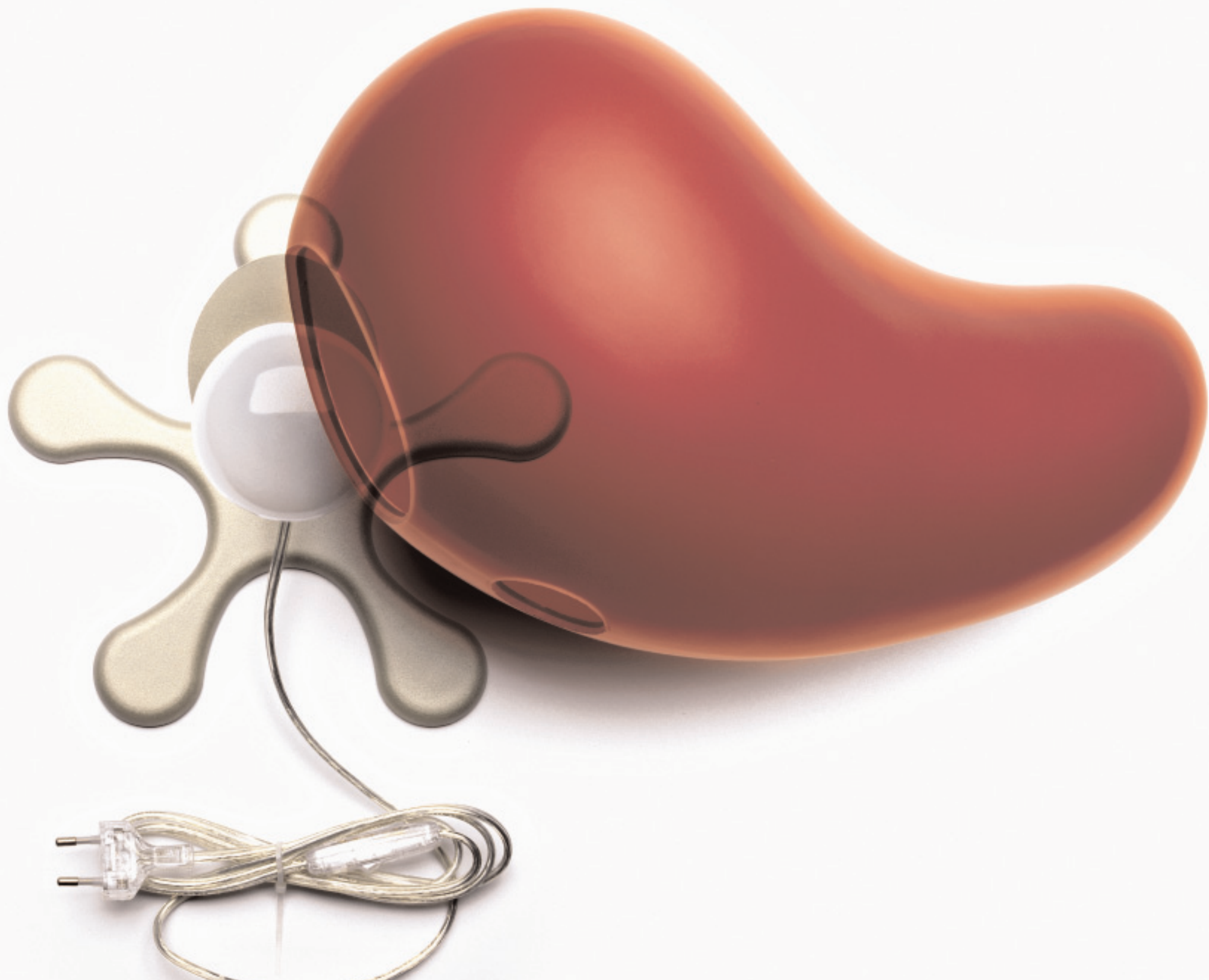
A circle of full-height aluminum blades, again laser-cut, is the self-supporting structure of Rha+Thor, designed by Nichetto and Gai, where the presence of an upper shade allows the light to be directed both upwards and downwards. The metallic mesh covered in silicone resin becomes both structure and surface in Bague by Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto, anticipating a particular approach which blends the visual and tactile quality of objects, creating a soft surface which is coherent with the shape.

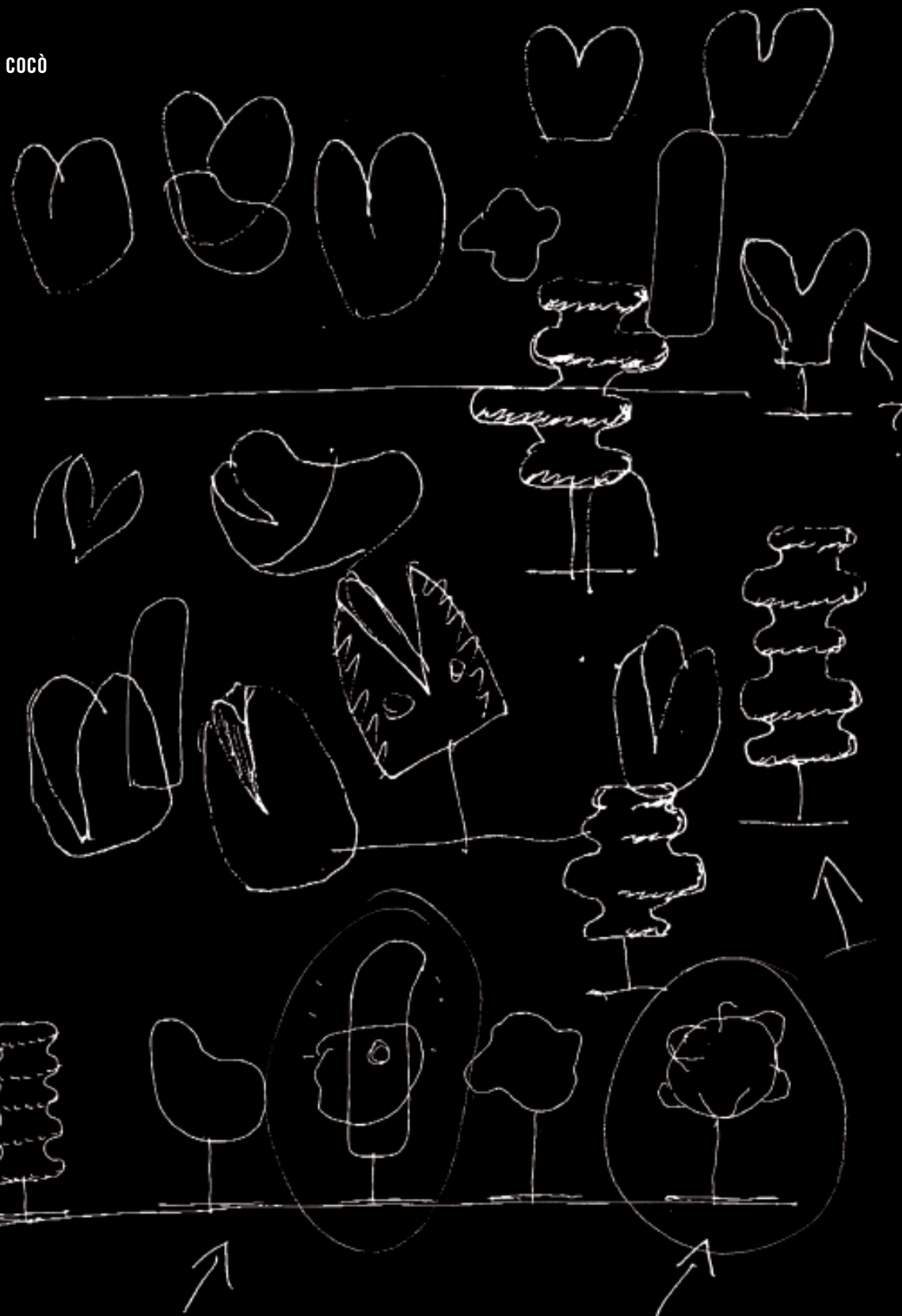
Foscarini has reached twenty years of activity in 2003: it has thirty employees, presents a volume of sales in continuous growth, most of which comes from the international market. The construction of their new headquarters is the symbolic and physical conclusion of the first important phase of the company's history. Located in Marcon, the building constitutes a significant expansion of the space available for the various company divisions; the architectural concept, spatial distribution, and interior design achieve perfect syntony and correspondence with the character of the products, the image and the overall quality of Foscarini.



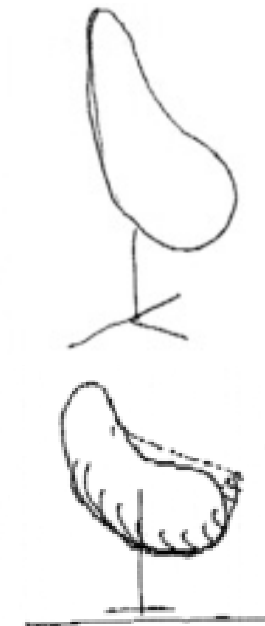
LAMPADE  
**COCÒ**







across and below:  
drawings from the collection, Aldo Cibic, 2000



## COCÒ 2000

Aldo Cibic

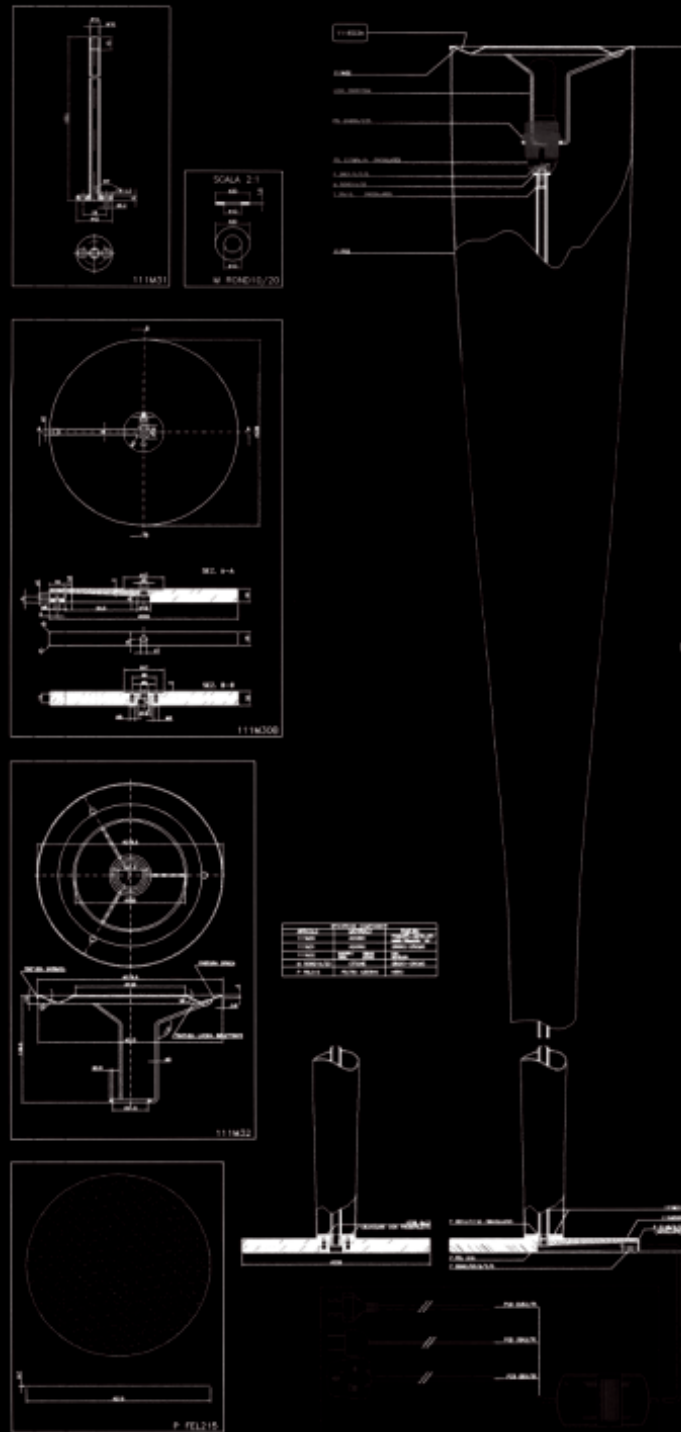
The name betrays the impish and playful figurative reference which inspired Aldo Cibic. With his usual approach, the designer attempts to “humanize” the object, softening it and smoothing all the rough edges. He simultaneously explores the potential of glass and the kind of light which a table lamp must provide. Various technical adaptations have changed the continuous and closed configuration which initially characterized the shade. To obtain glass of that shape blown into a still mold, particular attention was paid to controlling the thickness and the consistency of the material to avoid creating annoying shadows on the surface when the lamp was switched on, in the areas where the material might be thicker or could include air bubbles in the vitreous material. Another problem to be explored was the location of the area to attach the blowpipe, which was located on the bottom of the shade in the only possible area allowed by the shape of the glass, so that the opening could be covered with the lens-shaped element on which the foot of the fixture was attached. The large circular hole on the contrary was the answer to the requirement of exhausting the heat produced by the source, a 100 watt incandescent bulb, and ensuring the normal maintenance of the product. The dimension and position along the inclined axis of the shade are functional to the correct conveyance of the luminous flux onto the working surface. The result is a double lighting effect: warm and diffused through the glass,

white on the inside and white or ruby red on the outside, and directed through the round opening. In addition, to avoid fingerprints on the surface the shade is given a satin finish by processing it in acid. The design of the base of the support, in relation to the zoomorphic solution conceived by the designer, was regularized during the development phase, becoming a sort of webbed “foot” with five lobes made of die-cast aluminum and supplied with non-scratch pads. The support is a thin metal tube painted aluminum. Pushing the technical possibilities of shaping new forms in Murano glass one step further, in 2003 Cibic designed the Lampon “ball” with soft bumps blown into a still mold.

LAMPADE  
**MITE**







preceding pages:  
 prototypes *Mite*, 1999  
 across:  
 technical drawing for *Mite*, Foscarini technical  
 division, 2000  
 at top: detail of the kevlar® fiber

## MITE 2000

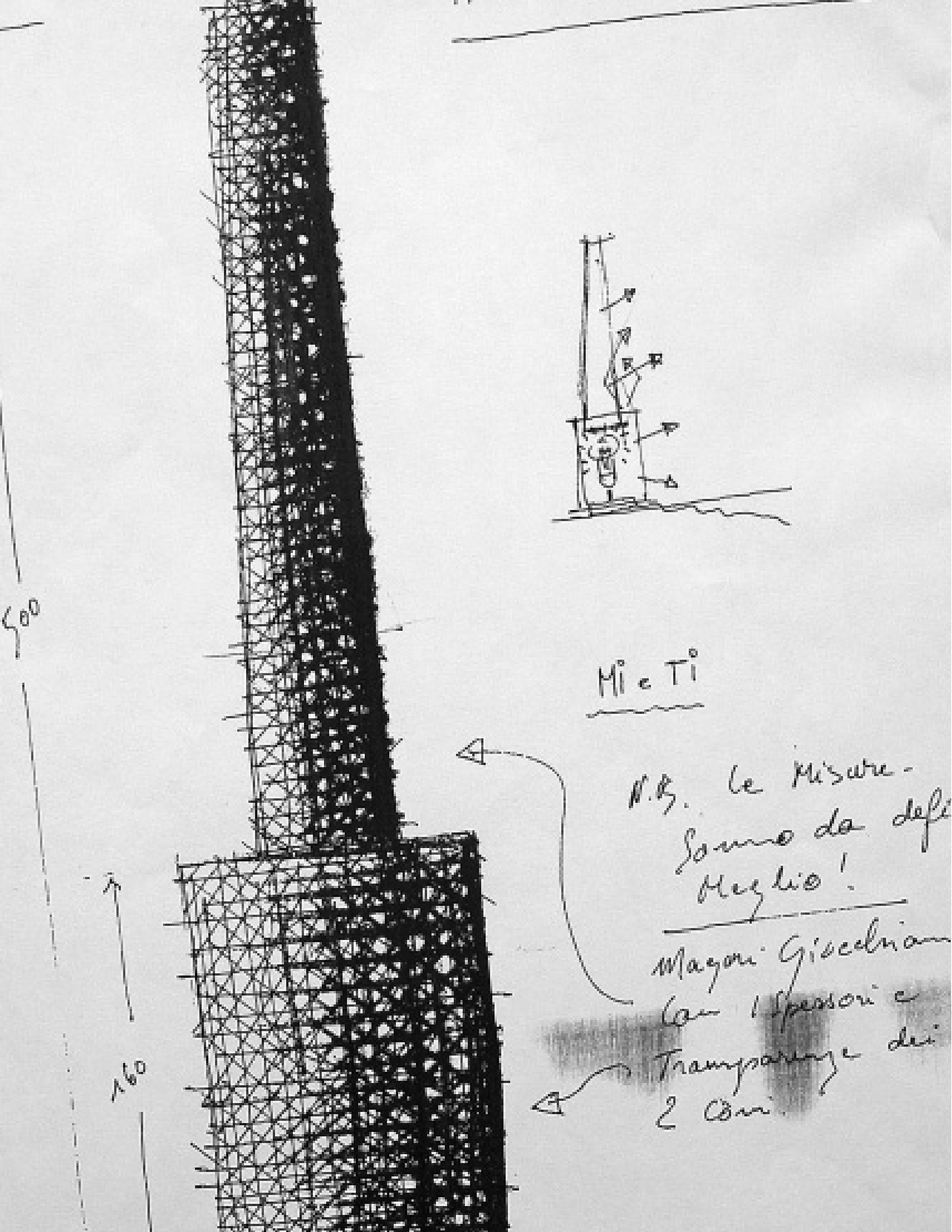
Marc Sadler

The product of over two years of research work, the Mite floor lamp has been in production since the year 2000. Conceived by Marc Sadler, it features a 1,85 meter high shade with a circular plan; its shape flares towards the top, and it is made of a woven glass fiber wrapped in a thread of carbon for the black version, and kevlar® for the yellow version. The shaping is done on a mold which is covered with two pieces of the glass fabric saturated with a special transparent resin, around which the fiber is then wrapped.

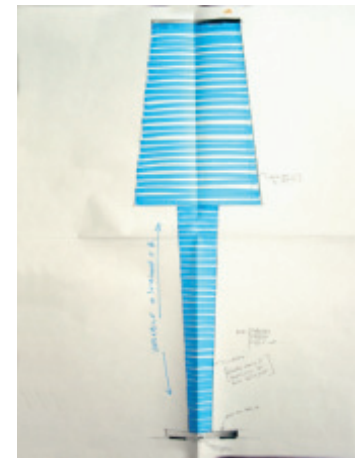
The polymerization occurs in a pressure controlled oven. The idea for the project came from the selection of the material and the processing techniques. “For the Foscarini lamps, says the designer, I had to pay particular attention to the historical origins of the company. Its product has always enjoyed a specifically Venetian connotation, because of its work in Murano glass, with great sensitivity towards the quality of the material. Plastic takes almost the opposite attitude towards the transformation of material. The intent was to find a connection between the techniques used for glass and the material at hand: in the case in point, I thought of a system which I had already used for products of mass distribution, such as golf clubs, tennis rackets and skis.” The result which Sadler was aiming at was to obtain a transparent unbreakable shade through roving, an industrial process based on wrapping carbon fibers, which for Mite were

applied onto a woven glass fiber fabric and held together with special resins. The quantity and position of the thread determined the degree of transparency of the material and simultaneously conferred resistance, flexibility and lightness by requiring lesser sections. A manufacturer was found, who usually applied this technology to fishing rods and boat oars, and had to adjust his production processes to satisfy this request: the greatest effort was in making sure that in each phase the reduction of the thickness, that is the consistency of the layer of composite material, did not weaken the structure. Sadler’s initial design, a tall cylinder flared at each end with an automobile headlight at the top, presented execution problems, in that it required two molds, and during the annealing process, the thread tended to overlap at the contact point, and increase the opacity of the material. The shape of the current shade originated in the effort to reduce the overlay of threads to a minimum, the narrow end part where the effect is most obvious was in fact shortened during the finishing phases. A determining factor for the overall luminous effect was also the location of the light source, a 250 watt halogen bulb with a dimmer: three metal rods keep it at a correct distance from the shade, leaving it suspended from the upper lip, in order to avoid the shadows that would have been cast, for example, by a central support.





## MITE



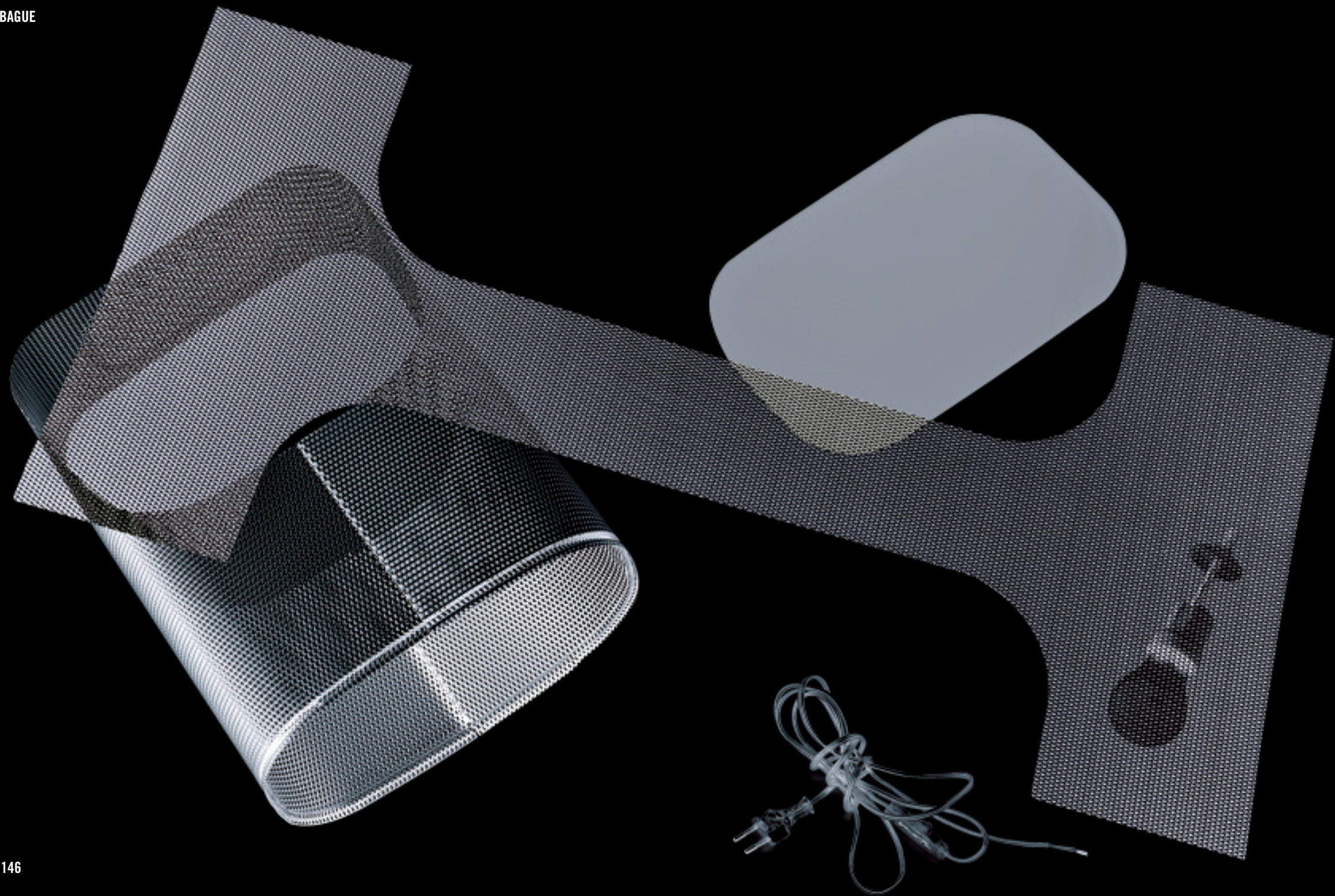
across:  
 design of a table lamp version,  
 Marc Sadler, 2000  
 from top:  
 Lite, Marc Sadler, 2001, views of the two sizes  
 and drawing

The upper closing ring, made of stainless steel polished to a mirror finish which holds the three rods, is designed to act as a reflector as well, redirecting the light back inside the lamp. To balance the weight with the proportions, a large flat disk, in stainless steel with a scratch-proof finish, serves as a base for the shade. The series was expanded in 2001 with the Lite table version and in 2003 with Kite, the wall fixture featuring a metal structure coated with aluminum-colored epoxy powder paint. The jury of the Compasso d'oro-ADI assigned the award to Mite and to the Tite suspension with the following motivation: "these models constitute a clear technological innovation in the field of glass processing." It is in fact an interesting and innovative research project applied to a floor lamp, with an original technical and material solution, made of a structure which is both bearing and illuminating; a contemporary material and new lighting performance to redefine the morphology and typology of the classic luminator. Mite is part of the permanent design collection of the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

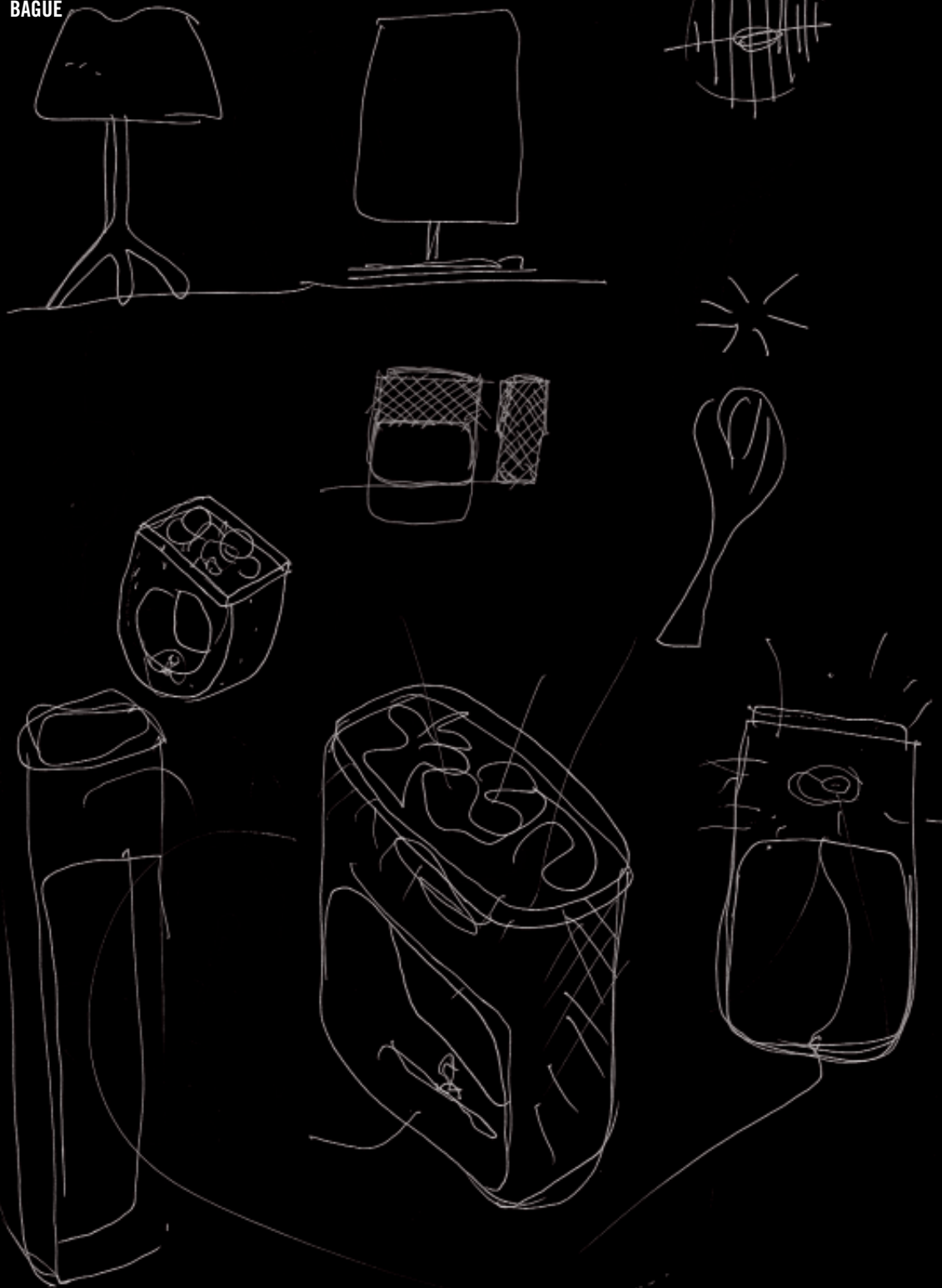


LAMPADE  
**BAGUE**



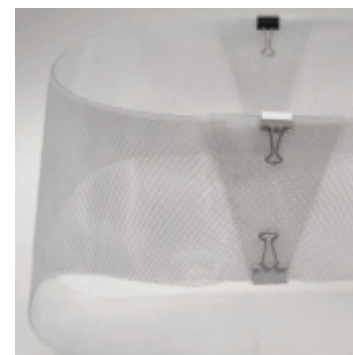
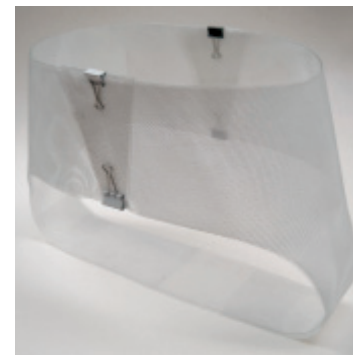


## BAGUE



## BAGUE 2003

Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto



across:  
drawings, Patricia Urquiola, 2003  
from top.  
models of the structure-diffuser, 2003

Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto drew inspiration for their table lamp from the shape of a ring to slip on the finger. The first model of Bague was a shape made out of cardboard, similar to the one now in production, presented with a sample of a possible construction material never before used to make a lamp, a silicone-covered mesh, a preview of the lighting and perceptive effect they imagined. The result, after several attempts at bending, cutting and fastening the material, was a fixture whose structural support and shade were constituted by a stretched metal mesh painted white, light grey or black, whose surface was covered in transparent silicone resin, to diffuse a soft filtered light. A thick plexiglass shield covering the body of the lamp became a sort of luminous “stopper”, to cut glare and increase the propagation of light upwards.

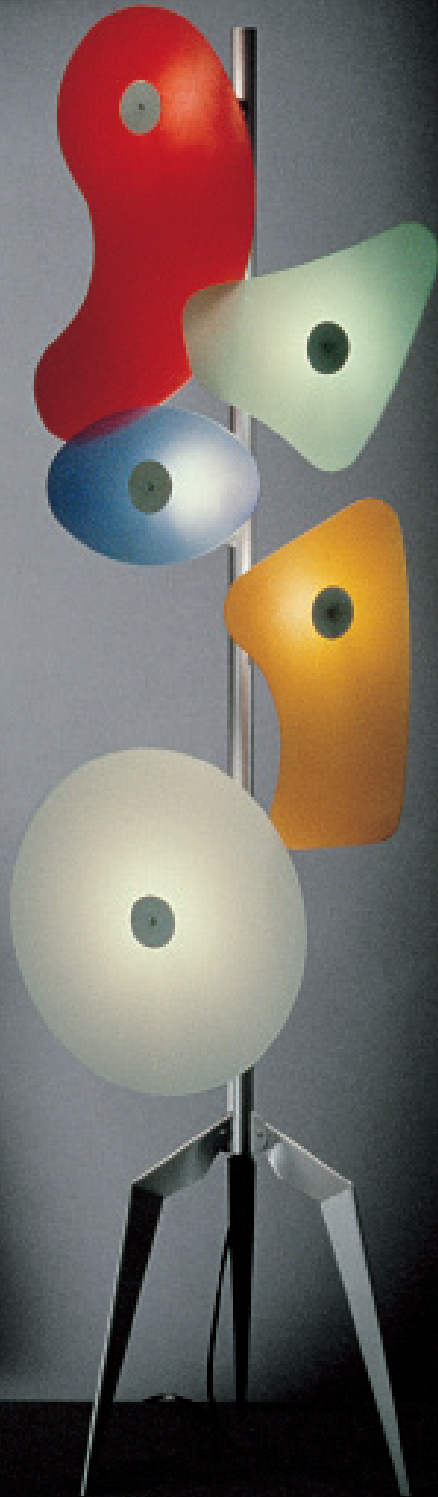
On the contrary, the table top is lit directly, without protective barriers, by the incandescent (100 watt) light source installed within the frame. Produced in two sizes, one elongated version, the other with reduced dimensions, it relegates the entry of the electric wire to the side, where it enters through a specifically designed round transparent fastener, to avoid compromising the fixture’s formal design.

Based on a precise figurative reference, Bague nevertheless adopts an original construction mode which unites the lamp’s base and shade into a single continuous form. And initiates an

exploration not only of the perceptive qualities of light, but also into the tactile qualities of the material, working through contrasts: the mesh core transmits an idea of softness though it remains rigid to the touch and constitutes the skeleton of the object, the resin on top mitigates the typically rigid look of metal. Bague thus embodies Foscarini’s specific interest in lamps which are technically well developed and produced without compromising their formal and visual emotional quality.



IDEAS  
**COMMUNICATION  
AND PHOTOGRAPHY**



catalog covers, Rodolfo Dordoni,  
1989 and 1993

## COMMUNICATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY

The evolution of Foscarini's communication strategy testifies to the progressive structuring of this fundamental instrument of business development, tied to specific situations, requirements and needs, and related to changes in the strategy and identity of the company. From an initial condition where the definition of production and product characteristics was its primary concern, Foscarini gradually moved towards a greater focus on issues of communication and image, until a continuous and determined process turned them into crucial factors in a close-knit dialogue with the process of defining design, research, typology and technical innovation. This evolution corresponded naturally to the increased attention which these issues have registered in the business world, especially for design companies. Product, structure, organization and process quality must always be adequately portrayed inside and outside the company. Integrated communication is a complex system, which starts with strategic decisions, and translates first into a global visual design, from the logo to the various types of printed material and publications, to the design of trade fair exhibitions and retail stores, and then involves the documentation of the relevant aspects of the company's work. Every company makes decisions regarding its characteristics and objectives which, within certain limits, can be modified or adjusted over time.

From 1983 to 1987, the Foscarini image, from the logo to the first catalogs, was created by Urbinati and Vecchiato, who emphasized the relationship



catalog covers, Claudio Dell'Olio/Box<sup>2</sup>,  
1996 (1998 edition);  
catalog cover, Attila, 2000

with Murano, the dialogue between their work in the field of contract and the new design venture. The result was a low-key, traditional and reassuring communication, which reflected the character of the blown glass products made by the company.

With the choice of Rudi von Wedel first and later Rodolfo Dordoni, designer and art director from 1988 to 1993, Foscarini progressively defined its own characteristics, which began to reach beyond the explicit reference to Murano, starting with the logo, but without forgetting its privileged and original material, glass, progressively integrated by other materials and technology. Renouncing the unequivocal identification with Venice, the physical and psychological origin of the company, was neither an obvious nor painless choice, but it was understood to be a necessary step towards building precise possibilities for further growth and development. Foscarini can count on a solid and well structured identity, which it deservedly identifies with the contemporary evolution of the culture of industrial design, developed under Dordoni's art direction, as the basis for its own design and production sensitivity and flexibility. After the conclusion of its relationship with Dordoni, who had used Emilio Tremolada for the still life photographs in the new catalogs, the Foscarini communication was entrusted to Claudio Dell'Olio of Box<sup>2</sup>. The focus of attention became the multiplication of independent collaborations and the development of design, as well as the overtures to an audience oriented towards the design project, the specific sensitivity and culture of living. This direction was confirmed by the decision to present photographic images showing the products in the catalog within domestic or work spaces, spaces where people live and work. The evolution of the photographic language must be seen in relation to the search for a different type of presentation to a public of professionals and consumers.



Caliz, photo by Santi Caleca, 1997





1983



1989



2001

Foscarini logos:  
Foscarini technical division, 1983;  
Rodolfo Dordoni, 1989;  
Artemio Croatto/Designwork, 2001  
below:  
cover of the general catalog and new  
products, Artemio Croatto/Designwork,  
2002 and 2003

A less neutral and detached style, a warmer and more seductive approach which would open new and unexplored spaces for success in terms of image as well as sales. From 1994 to 1999 Santi Caleca participated in the photographic campaign, contributing decisively to the creation of a new visual image of how the products could be used.

The collaboration which ties Foscarini to the Attila advertising firm in Milan during the years 2000-2001, marks a significant step forward in which the company definitively and completely adopts all the instruments of communication, conceived within a vision which sought an international dimension and referred to the world of fashion design, in a rather unusual approach for industrial design.

In 2001, the visual design was entrusted to Artemio Croatto of Designwork in Udine. The new project for visual design and communication, illustrated with the images of Massimo Gardone/Azimut and Ruy Teixeira, defines a strongly contemporary expressive language; the innovative characteristics of the company's products dialogue intensively with the new global quality of the image, which adopts crisp, clean and rational graphics, emphasized by strong colors and the pursuit of an emotional visual quality.

A language declined in all the instruments of the corporate image, from the logo to the catalogs to the exhibition design for fairs and other events, to the web site. The definition and progressive building of a company identity, focused on innovation and research in industrial design, quality certification for processes and services, found further application, a place for dialogue, theoretical and operative meditation in the "Lux" magazine, a privileged and articulated instrument for the consolidation of the specific culture of the design company.



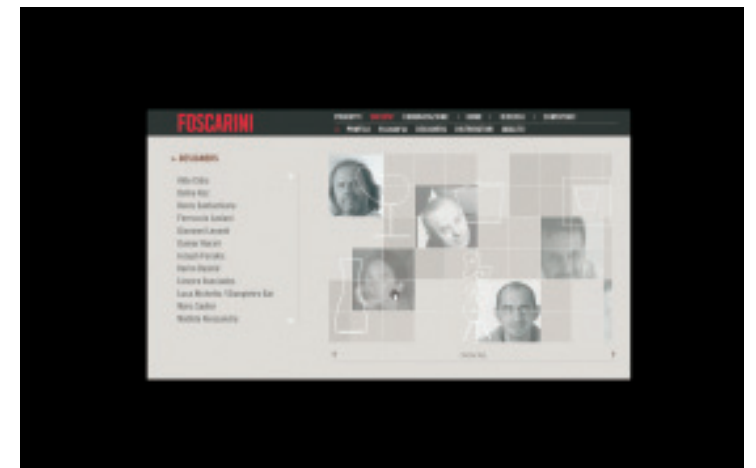
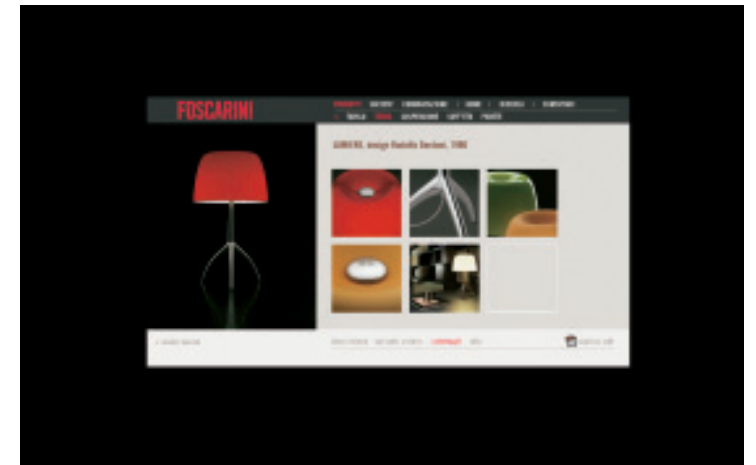
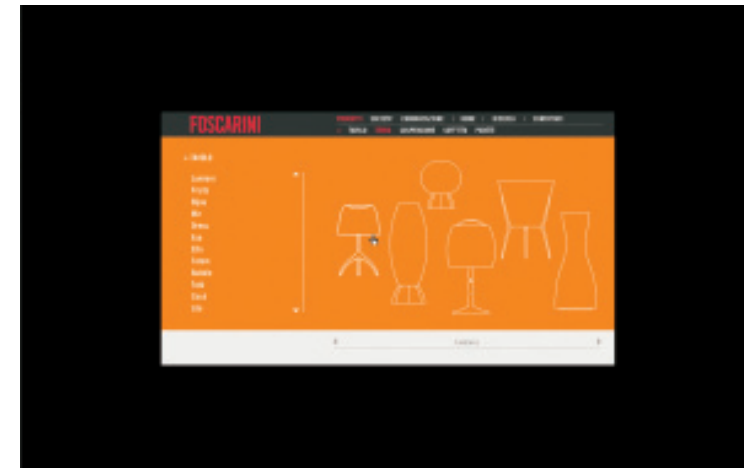




"Lux" magazine, Artemio Croatto/Designwork cover and inside pages



at top and right:  
home page and pages from the website,  
Artemio Croatto/Designwork 2002  
below:  
advertisement, Artemio Croatto/Designwork,  
2003



**DESIGNERS**  
**PRODUCT ARCHIVE**  
**CHRONOLOGY**  
**BIBLIOGRAPHY**



**Valerio Bottin**

Born in Padua in 1963, in recent years he has complemented his work as an architect with industrial design, particularly in the field of lighting. His collaboration with Foscarini began in 1994 with Mistral, and at present counts about ten styles, including Sphera, Double, Vitt, Cross, Totem, Bubble, Tutù, Affix and Spring.

**Patrice Butler**

An architect educated in London and New York, since the mid Eighties he is involved in lighting, architecture and interior design projects. Since 1997, following several years of professional residency in China, he has been working in London, especially as a lighting designer. For Foscarini he created the Venice collection and the Nostromo system in 1992.

**Aldo Cibic**

Born in Schio (Vicenza) in 1955, he was one of the founding members of Sottsass Associati and one of the protagonists of the Memphis group. With Antonella Spiezio and Smilian Cibic, he founded Cibic & Partners in 1989. The studio designs architecture and interior design in Italy and abroad – from department stores, to film theatres to public works – and works in industrial design, experimenting with self-production and collaborations with various companies. The first project for Foscarini was Cocò in 2000, the second Lampon in 2003.



**Tom Dixon**

Born in Tunisia (Sfax, 1959), he studied in London. A professional musician, he entered the field of design as both designer and entrepreneur, experimenting with materials, technology and form, exploring for example the theme of recycling. For Foscarini he was the author of the Lightweight collection in 1995.

**Rodolfo Dordoni**

Born in Milan in 1954, architect and designer, he works in industrial design, trade fair and commercial design. He began working in 1979, focusing on the field of furniture design, where he was responsible for the artistic direction and coordinated image of several major manufacturers. From 1988 to 1993 he worked on the company identity and art direction for Foscarini, for which he designed Fruits, Lumiere, Bijou, Blossoms and Buds.

**Jozep Forakis**

A designer of Greek origin, born in New York in 1962; he moved to Milan, after an initial experience in the United States in the fields of art, theatre, high tech and bio-medicine, developing research in the field of interactive digital technology. In 1993, he opened his own business, working in the field of strategic research and the development of design products. Havana, a lamp designed for Foscarini in 1993, is part of the permanent collection of MoMA in New York.



**Giulio Gianturco**

A self-taught designer, with a passion for technical materials focused particularly on stainless steel, he began to design objects in the early Nineties. Among his creations, concentrated in the field of faucets and home appliances, there is Blues, a lamp created for Foscarini in 1998.

**Gordon Guillaumier**

Born in Malta in 1966, he moved to Milan in 1989 to finish his studies in industrial design. He worked with architect Rodolfo Dordoni on product design and development. In addition to artistic consulting and design management for furniture manufacturers, he has created a variety of objects, including Senglea for Foscarini in 1993.

**Itamar Harari**

Born in Israel (Tel-Aviv, 1960), he graduated in architecture in Florence and moved to Milan in 1989, to work in the Zanuso studio and Atelier Alchimia. He alternated his work in architecture and trade fair design with collaborations for a variety of manufacturers in the field of industrial design. In 1995, he opened a consulting, design and management firm. For Foscarini he is the author of Mir in 1996 and, two years later, Joint.



**Alex Hochstrasser**

Born in 1973, he has designed objects since 1997, especially lighting fixtures. Following his collaboration with international groups such as Ideo, he added visual design interventions to his work. For Foscarini he designed Hoc in 1999.

**Defne Koz**

Born in Ankara (Turkey) in 1964, following her studies in Milan, she collaborated briefly with Sottsass Associati. She has designed furniture, tableware and appliances for many international companies, in addition to store and interior design. Her collaboration with Foscarini began in 1994 with Circus, and led two years later to the creation of Dress.

**Ferruccio Laviani**

Architect and designer born in Cremona in 1960, he was one of the founders of the Solid group and an associate of the De Lucchi studio in Milan between 1986 and 1991. Though continuing product design, his work over time has acquired a more ample dimension including the artistic direction, graphic identity, and design of trade fair appearances, events and showrooms for a number of companies in the furniture field. Orbital for Foscarini in 1992 marked his debut in designing lamps, a collaboration which proceeded with Bit, Dolmen, Supernova and Lenin.



**Giovanni Levanti**

Born in Palermo in 1956, where he graduated in architecture, he continued his studies in Milan. A professor at the Domus Academy, since 1986 he has practiced design in Milan, collaborating with various Italian and foreign companies and participating in international design exhibitions. For Foscarini he conceived the Quadra lamp in 1993 and in 1996 the Quadralta.

**Lievore Asociados**

Founded in Barcelona in 1991 by Alberto Lievore (Buenos Aires, 1948), Jeannette Altherr (Heidelberg, 1965) and Manuel Molina (Barcelona, 1963), the Lievore firm works in the design of furniture, interiors, and packaging, consulting and artistic direction. In 1996 the studio designed the Esa style, the following year Caliz.



**Piero Lissoni**

The architect Lissoni was born in Milan in 1956, and founded Studio Lissoni in 1986 with Nicoletta Canesi, working in the field of industrial, graphic, exhibition and interior design, and architecture. His first jobs date back to the late Seventies; his name is linked to many manufacturers in the field of furniture, for whom he creates not only objects but frequently brand identity as well. For Foscarini he designed the Basic, Cap, Flat and Bugia styles in 1994.

**Francesco Lucchese**

Born in the province of Messina in 1960, he graduated in architecture in Milan in 1985. Over the years, he elaborated many industrial design projects in the field of lighting – Mix for Foscarini dates from 1996, and ceramics. Most recently the studio has begun working on the coordinated image of products including graphics, display and advertising.

**Alessandra Matilde**

After studying theatre design in Venice, she moved to London where for several years she designed installations and sets. Living in New York since 1999, she began to conceive her first luminous experiments which would lead her to create installations, one of a kind or limited edition pieces for galleries, private collectors and companies. In 2003 she created the Ellepi lamp for Foscarini.



**Marco Mencacci**

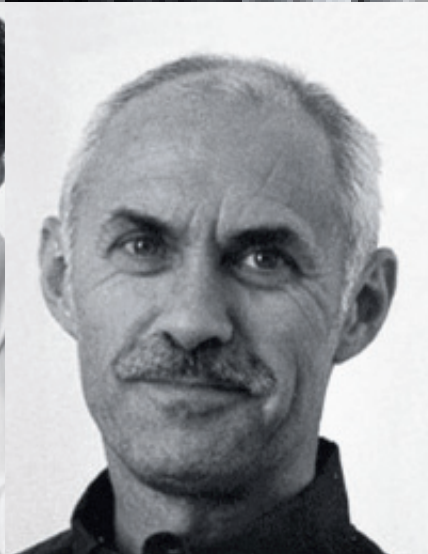
Born in 1959, following his studies in Paris and his debut as a textile designer for fashion, he settled in Italy in 1987. Besides designing furnishings, such as the Ramon and Lucindo suspensions created for Foscarini in 1992, he does interior design work and set design for the theatre.

**Angelo Micheli**

Born in Crotta D'Adda (Cremona) in 1959, an architect and designer and one of the founders of the Solid group, in 1984 he began to collaborate with Michele De Lucchi in Milan in the field of architecture and industrial design. Over the past ten years his attention has been focused on the "design of services", creating systems of communication for institutions and banks which reinvent the use of space beginning with the product. In 1994 he designed the Cielo lamp for Foscarini.

**Ruben Mochi**

Born in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 1952, an architect, he continued his studies in industrial design at the Royal College of Arts in London. For twenty years he has been in professional practice, managing exhibition design for trade fairs and shows, for Italian and foreign clients in the field of fashion and furniture. In 1991 he created the Shelly lamp for Foscarini.



**Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai**

Luca Nichetto (Venice, 1976) and Gianpietro Gai (Valdobbiadene, Treviso, 1972) studied industrial design at the IUAV di Venezia. They have worked together since 1998 in projects for lighting, objects for the home, graphic and web design. Since 2001, besides designing Rha+Thor, Maui and O-space for Foscarini, they have collaborated with the company in researching and developing new materials.

**Roberto Palomba and Ludovica Serafini**

Architects and designers, they have worked together since 1994. In addition to their work in architecture, exhibition design and product design, particularly in the field of ceramics, the studio is responsible for the artistic direction and marketing of several companies. In 1996, they designed the Zen, Olly, Dom and Hola lamps for Foscarini.

**Luc Ramael**

A Belgian interiors architect and designer, he teaches and maintains a professional practice in the fields of interior and product design, particularly in the field of lighting. In 1993 he designed the Clips lamp for Foscarini.



**Karim Rashid**

Born in Cairo in 1960, he grew up mainly in Canada; after graduating in industrial design, he earned his specialization in Naples before moving to Milan to work in the studio Rodolfo Bonetto. In his New York firm, which he founded in 1993, he works in industrial design, interior design and exhibition design for galleries, exhibitions and museums. In 2002 he designed the Blob lamp for Foscarini.

**Prospero Rasulo**

Born in 1953 in Stigliano di Matera, an artist and designer, he has worked since 1980 in the fields of set design, painting, sculpture and exhibition design. During the same years he began to collaborate with the studio Alchimia and Alessandro Mendini, alternating his design work with the promotion of cultural initiatives. In addition to his work with the industry, he exhibits his pieces in many art and design galleries. Since 1992, he has designed the Alcea, Stilla and Qua lamps for Foscarini.

**Marc Sadler**

Born in Austria, of French origin but Italian by choice, for years he has conducted important experiences in the field of sporting equipment, where he has experimented with innovative materials and production technologies, a baggage of knowledge which he has developed in his many projects for home appliances, bathroom fixtures and furniture products. In 2001 he won the Compasso d'oro-ADI for the Mite and Tite collection by Foscarini.



**Denis Santachiara**

A self-taught designer, he was born in Campagnola (Re) in 1951. Following his research on soft technology in the mid Seventies, he has collaborated since 1984 with Italian and foreign, public and private companies in the design of exhibitions and cultural initiatives, and in the research and development of new products. In 1999 he created the Elfo lamp for Foscarini.

**Studio Kairos**

Founded in 1980, it counts Massimo Bonetti (Turin, 1949), Giuseppe Manente (Venice, 1947) and Abramo Mion (Mirano, Venice, 1951). In addition to building and interior design, they work in design and development in the field of furniture. In 2003 the studio designed the Yet lamp-shelf for Foscarini.



**Adam D. Tihany**

Architect, born in Transylvania in 1948, after several European experiences he established his firm in New York in 1978. A design practice which involved many areas, from residential and commercial interiors to graphics, and later focused on design in the field of food service and in contract work with important international commissions. In 1983 he designed the Wassily off the Wall collection with Joseph Mancini for Foscarini.

**Pio and Tito Toso**

Architects and partners since 1996, they operate in the field of public and private architecture and industrial design, collaborating particularly with companies in the field of furnishings, such as Foscarini, for which they designed the Manta lamp in 2001. The studio's work includes design projects for trade fairs, boutiques and offices, and they are responsible for the visual and graphic identities of the companies.



**Carlo A. Urbinati Ricci and Alessandro Vecchiato**

Carlo A. Urbinati (Genoa, 1955) and Alessandro Vecchiato (Venice, 1959) Clessidra and Graphos, designed by Urbinati and Vecchiato, are the first standard lamps produced by Foscarini in 1982. Owners of the company since 1987, and sole designers through 1989, except for their brief collaboration with Adam D. Tihany, they have created over twenty collections, including Plana (1984), Folio (1990) and Shape (1998), still in the catalog.

**Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto**

Patricia Urquiola was born in Oviedo (Spain) and graduated in architecture in 1989. Following her experiences with De Padova and Lissoni Associati, in 2001 she opened her own firm where she works in architecture, exhibition and industrial design, collaborating with Italian furniture manufacturers. Eliana Gerotto, born in Venice, studied techniques of communication in Milan. She works in several fields: from the graphics and communications

field to the design of international exhibitions, to interior decoration. In 2003 they created the Bague lamp together for Foscarini.



**1982/1989**  
**Clessidra**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1982/1995**  
**Graphos**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1983/1990**  
**Indice**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



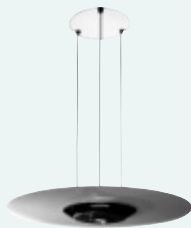
**1983/1994**  
**Refloz**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1983/1995**  
**Rolli**  
(glass rods and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1984/1995**  
**Floppi**  
(pressed glass and industrial glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1984/1995**  
**Pivot**  
(pressed glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



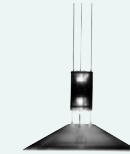
**1984/in catalog**  
**Plana**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1985/1992**  
**Kigò**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



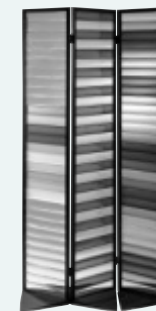
**1985/1991**  
**Lift**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1985/1995**  
**Wassily off the Wall**  
(blown glass and metal)

Adam D. Tihany  
with Joseph Mancini



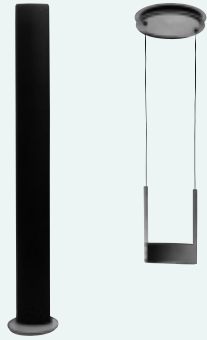
**1986/1993**  
**Colora**  
(pressed glass and extruded aluminum)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1986/1993**  
**Luna**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1986/1993**  
**Monolite**  
(glass rods and extruded aluminum)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1986/1993**  
**Tilla**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1987/1995**  
**Domino**  
(pressed glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1988/1999**  
**Randa**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1988/1992**  
**Samarcanda**  
(blown glass, metal and copper)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1988/1995**  
**Skeet**  
(pressed glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1990/1998**  
**Achille**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



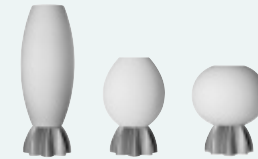
**1990/1995**  
**Flou**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1990/in catalog**  
**Folio**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1990/2003**  
**Fruits**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Rodolfo Dordoni



**1990/1995**  
**Luis**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1990/in catalog**  
**Lumiere**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Rodolfo Dordoni



**1990/1995**  
**Tandem**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



**1991/1995**  
**Shelly**  
(molded glass and die-cast metal)

Ruben Mochi





**1992/1997**  
**Alcea**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Prospero Rasulo



**1992/in catalog**  
**Bijou**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Rodolfo Dordoni



**1992/2000**  
**Lucindo**  
(blown glass and metal)

Marco Mencacci



**1992/2001**  
**Nostromo**  
(aluminum)

Patrice Butler



**1992/in catalog**  
**Orbital**  
(industrial glass and metal)

Ferruccio Laviani



**1992/1998**  
**Ramon**  
(blown glass and beads)

Marco Mencacci



**1992/1999**  
**Venice**  
(blown glass and beads)

Patrice Butler



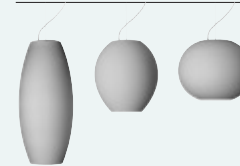
**1993/in catalog**  
**Bit**  
(industrial glass)

Ferruccio Laviani



**1993/1998**  
**Blossoms**  
(blown glass and metal)

Rodolfo Dordoni



**1993/in catalog**  
**Buds**  
(blown glass)

Rodolfo Dordoni



**1993/2001**  
**Clips**  
(parchment and metal)

Luc Ramael



**1993/in catalog**  
**Havana**  
(polyethylene or polypropylene and metal)

Jozeph Forakis



**1993/in catalog**  
**Quadro**  
(blown glass and industrial glass)

Giovanni Levanti



1993/1996  
**Senglea**  
(blown glass and metal)

Gordon Guillaumier



1994/2001  
**Basic**  
(blown glass and metal)

Piero Lissoni



1994/1996  
**Cap**  
(blown glass and metal)

Piero Lissoni



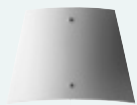
1994/1997  
**Cielo**  
(blown glass and metal)

Angelo Micheli



1994/in catalog  
**Circus**  
(blown glass and metal)

Defne Koz



1994/in catalog  
**Flat**  
(industrial glass)

Piero Lissoni



1994/in catalog  
**Mistral**  
(blown glass)

Valerio Bottin



1994/1996  
**Sphera**  
(blown glass and metal)

Valerio Bottin



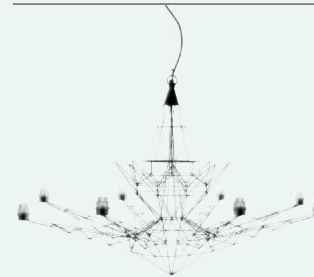
1994/1997  
**Stilla**  
(blown glass)

Prospero Rasulo



1994/1996  
**Vis a Vis**  
(blown glass and metal)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



1995/in catalog  
**Lightweight**  
(blown glass and metal)

Tom Dixon



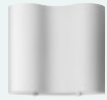
1996/1998  
**Bugia**  
(pressed glass)

Piero Lissoni



1996/in catalog  
**Dolmen**  
(Lexan and aluminum)

Ferruccio Laviani



**1996/in catalog**  
**Double**  
(blown glass)

Valerio Bottin



**1996/in catalog**  
**Dress**  
(blown glass)

Defne Koz



**1996/in catalog**  
**Esa**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Lievore Asociados



**1996/2003**  
**Mir**  
(blown glass and die-cast metal)

Itamar Harari



**1996/1998**  
**Mix**  
(blown glass)

Francesco Lucchese



**1996/2000**  
**Oily**  
(blown glass)

Roberto Palomba  
and Ludovica Serafini



**1996/1998**  
**Quadratta**  
(blown glass and industrial glass)

Giovanni Levanti



**1996/in catalog**  
**Vitt**  
(blown glass and metal)

Valerio Bottin



**1996/2000**  
**Zen**  
(blown glass and wood)

Roberto Palomba  
and Ludovica Serafini



**1997/2000**  
**Caliz**  
(blown glass, metal or wood)

Lievore Asociados



**1997/in catalog**  
**Hola**  
(industrial glass)

Roberto Palomba  
and Ludovica Serafini



**1998/2001**  
**Blues**  
(blown glass and metal)

Giulio Gianturco



**1998/in catalog**  
**Cross**  
(blown glass)

Valerio Bottin



**1998/in catalog**  
**Dom**  
(blown glass)

Roberto Palomba  
and Ludovica Serafini



**1998/2001**  
**Joint**  
(polycarbonate and metal)

Itamar Harari



**1998/in catalog**  
**Qua**  
(blown glass)

Prospero Rasulo



**1998/in catalog**  
**Shapes**  
(blown glass)

Carlo Urbinati  
and Alessandro Vecchiato



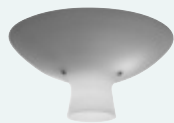
**1998/in catalog**  
**Totem**  
(polyethylene and metal)

Valerio Bottin



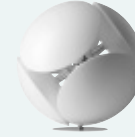
**1999/in catalog**  
**Elfo**  
(blown glass and metal)

Denis Santachiara



**1999/2000**  
**Hoc**  
(blown glass)

Alex Hochstrasser



**2000/in catalog**  
**Bubble**  
(polycarbonate and metal)

Valerio Bottin



**2000/in catalog**  
**Cocò**  
(blown glass and metal)

Aldo Cibic



**2000/in catalog**  
**Mite and Tite**  
(woven glass fiber and carbon or kevlar® thread)

Marc Sadler



**2000/in catalog**  
**Supernova**  
(stainless steel or aluminum)

Ferruccio Laviani



**2000/in catalog**  
**Tutù**  
(blown glass and metal)

Valerio Bottin



**2001/in catalog**  
**Affix**  
(blown glass and metal)

Valerio Bottin



**2001/in catalog**  
**Lenin**  
(blown glass and stainless steel)

Ferruccio Laviani



**2001/in catalog**  
**Lite**  
(woven glass fiber and carbon or kevlar® thread)

Marc Sadler



**2001/in catalog**  
**Manta**  
(industrial glass)

Pio and Tito Toso



**2001/2003**  
**Spring**  
(blown glass)

Valerio Bottin



**2001/in catalog**  
**Rha+Thor**  
(aluminum)

Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai



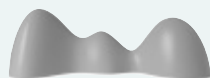
**2001/in catalog**  
**Tutù parete**  
(blown glass)

Valerio Bottin



**2002/in catalog**  
**Blob**  
(polypropylene)

Karim Rashid



**2002/in catalog**  
**Lampon**  
(blown glass and metal)

Aldo Cibic



**2002/in catalog**  
**Maui**  
(blown glass)

Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai



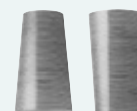
**2003/in catalog**  
**Bague**  
(metal mesh)

Patricia Urquiola and Eliana Gerotto



**2003/in catalog**  
**Ellepi**  
(polycarbonate)

Alessandra Matilde



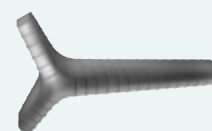
**2003/in catalog**  
**Kite**  
(woven glass fabric and carbon or kevlar® thread)

Marc Sadler



**2003/in catalog**  
**O-space**  
(polyurethane foam)

Luca Nichetto and Gianpietro Gai



**2003/in catalog**  
**Yet**  
(polycarbonate)

Studio Kairos



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1981** Foscarini spa is founded with headquarters in Fondamenta Manin 1 on Murano
- 1982** Graphos and Clessidra are the first lamps designed by Carlo Urbinati and Alessandro Vecchiato
- 1983** on November 13th, presentation of the first catalog with products designed by Urbinati and Vecchiato, and the first marketing meeting is held.
- 1985** Adam D. Tihany with the glass collection Wassily off the Wall is the first independent designer at Foscarini
- 1988** Vecchiato and Urbinati buy Foscarini; Rodolfo Dordoni becomes the company art director and designer through 1993; a new company image is created
- 1992** Ferruccio Laviani designs Orbital, the first lamp that is not in Murano glass, which becomes an important commercial success and an icon for Foscarini
- 1993** Havana by Jozeph Forakis uses plastic; the company moves to Marcon (Venice)
- 1996** Foscarini obtains the certification of quality UNI EN ISO 9001; Claudio Dell'Olio / Box<sup>2</sup> is responsible for the new Foscarini catalog
- 2000** during Euroluce in Milan the new products are presented in a fashion show
- 2001** Mite and Tite by Marc Sadler are awarded the Compasso d'oro-ADI, a prestigious recognition in Italian design
- 2002** Artemio Croatto/Designwork, Foscarini's new visual designer, redesigns the instruments of visual communication and the company identity
- 2003** the new Foscarini headquarters is built in Marcon (Venice), and inaugurated in November

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