

ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SALONE DEL MOBILE 2018,
THE KARTELL MUSEUM OPENS A NEW
EXHIBITION DEDICATED TO
ACHILLE AND PIER GIACOMO CASTIGLIONI

15 April 2018 - 18 January 2019

On the occasion of the Salone del Mobile 2018, the Kartell Museum is set to open a new exhibition entitled *"Achille, Pier Giacomo Castiglioni and Kartell. Light and objects in a balance between modernity and tradition"*, dedicated to the extraordinary creative partnership between Kartell and two leading designers of the last century, Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglione.

The exhibition, organised by Kartell with the support of the Achille Castiglioni Foundation, was created to celebrate the 100th anniversary since the birth of Achille Castiglioni and illustrates the cooperation between Achille, Pier Giacomo Castiglioni and Kartell, examining all the objects born from this partnership.

Achille Castiglioni began his partnership with Kartell in 1959, designing, together with his brother Pier Giacomo, the first luminaires of the "KD" Division and the "Rocchetto" series of stools and tables in 1969. In 1979, following the premature death of his brother, Achille created a system of modular mirrors with and without lights.

The design of the objects by Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni for Kartell is inspired by familiar shapes but, at the same time, expresses a highly contemporary spirit. The designers offer sophisticated reinterpretations, with a subtle irony and a great scenic effect, which can be easily fitted into environments featuring ancient objects, but also in modern contexts. The plastic materials are characterised by rich finishes and nuanced and sophisticated colours.

During the year, also as a tribute to the 100th anniversary of Achille Castiglioni, special guided tours will be organised in cooperation with the Achille Castiglione Foundation.

THE PRODUCTS

THE “KD” LAMPS

The Lighting Division “KD” (Kartell Design) opened in 1959 and marked the beginning of a partnership between the company and well-known designers, including Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, Sergio Asti, Joe Colombo and Marco Zanuso. The division’s lamps are the result of the concomitant launch of new materials on the market, including Montecatini’s Vedril methacrylate and Polifiber’s Raflon fabric, primarily used to produce, using mass-production moulding processes, the luminaires designed by Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni. In the process of creating the products, the designers are given great freedom when designing and choose to use plastic materials instead of glass, since they are both unbreakable and light. The four pendant lamps created by Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, although available in a variety of sizes and variations to suit the different spaces of the house, offer a convincing design vision that can be found in all the luminaires of this division.

“ROCCHETTO” COFFEE TABLE AND STOOL

Furnishings are among the types of objects that, over the years, together with chairs, have strongly contributed to determine the brand image. The project involving furnishings, which often have a distinctive design due to the fact that the production of objects that are small in size sometimes allows for formal freedom, has allowed Kartell to experiment with plastic materials and innovative production methods, as in the case of the “Rocchetto” coffee table made with the new polyester processing technology. The “Rocchetto” coffee table and stool, designed since 1967, were among the most popular accessories at the time. The shape of the products, already evident in the name, is that of a thread spool: a cylinder with two discs, one on each end. This structure, reintroduced by Achille and Pier Giacomo in the unmistakable ‘Castiglioni style’, with irony and cleverness, becomes a large polyester spool consisting of two equal elements joined by a bolt, which, with the addition of the shelf or cushion, become a coffee table or a stool.

MODULAR MIRRORS

The cooperation between Achille Castiglioni and Kartell continued even after the premature death of Pier Giacomo in 1968. In 1977, Achille began designing the system of modular mirrors with or without lights, which were added to the catalogue in 1979. It is a reflection on the theme of modularity, which Kartell is particularly interested in, as well as being essential for design research in the 1970s. Its originality and ingeniousness lies in the concept of a self-illuminating mirror. The mirror, which also meets purely decorative requirements, is of great impact both when placed individually and when integrated into horizontal or vertical compositions with repetitive elements. The back tray support in expanded polyurethane, which contains both the points for fastening to the wall and the electrical parts, is fixed to the mirror by means of two ABS side guides that can be inserted on the long or short side to allow elements to be freely assembled. The mirrors are included in the project for the Buriassi restaurant in via Lecco in Milan, which was completed by Achille Castiglioni in 1978 and for which custom modules were made.



Kartellmuseo

PierGiacomo (1913-1968) and Achille (1918-2002)

Graduated in Architecture in Milan. After the war they worked with their brother, Livio, focusing on design, urban planning and architecture. In 1962, they opened their own office in Castello Square in Milan. They carried out an intense professional business and were world-renowned for their projects related to lighting, furnishing and spectacular settings. They were University professors - Pier Giacomo in Milan, Achille in Turin and, later, in Milan. The Castiglioni brothers received many awards, including the permanent exhibition of works in various international museums and numerous Compasso D'Oro awards (five for Pier Giacomo and nine for Achille). Moreover, in 1997, the MoMA of New York dedicated a major personal exhibition to Achille Castiglioni.

KARTELL MUSEUM

The Kartell Museum is a project launched in 1999 to enhance the cultural value of industrial products. The Museum tells the story of the brand from its inception in 1949 to today. The main goal is to bring visitors closer to the world of design as well as to aesthetic and productive processes, exploring the link between industry, design and materials, showing how a design object can be considered a true work of art.

THE ACHILLE CASTIGLIONI FOUNDATION

The Achille Castiglioni Foundation (Piazza Castello, 27) was established in 2012 in order to carry out the activities of the Achille Castiglioni Studio in a more effective and transparent manner, with the aim of enhancing and making available to the public the material that is part of the actual heritage of the famous architect's cultural, artistic and professional activity. By managing and using the archive, the Achille Castiglioni Foundation intends to make it accessible to the public, showcasing not only the artefacts designed by the architect but also archive documents and the related design processes.

Every year, the Foundation hosts a temporary exhibition.

Over the years, the Foundation has developed a steady and close relationship with visitors, who have steadily increased over time, and are now more than 52,000.

The Museum Studio at the Foundation can be visited with guided tours only and booking is required. The tour lasts about 60 minutes on average and aims to give visitors a general idea of the design process adopted by Achille Castiglioni, by showcasing both the artefacts he created and the didactic processes that Achille adopted throughout his long academic career.

It also aims to conduct research, purchase, store, communicate and exhibit - for study, educational and leisure purposes - a series of documents or objects related to the work of Achille Castiglioni.