



BOTANICA

a commission by PLART FOUNDATION

SPAZIO ROSSANA ORLANDI

BOTANICA

About the commission:

Botanica is the latest project by studio FormaFantasma, commissioned by Plart, an Italian foundation dedicated to scientific research and technological innovation in the recovery, restoration and conservation of works of art and design produced in plastic. Maria Pia Incutti, founder of Plart and Marco Petroni, curator of the project, commissioned the studio to create their own personal interpretation of polymeric materials.

The perception of plastic materials has drastically changed over time. Initially considered the material of the future, synthetic polymers are now seen as the symbol of a not anymore exciting oil era. Scientific research is increasingly looking to find sustainable alternatives or ways to make plastic biodegradable. In opposition to this, the Plart foundation is addressing another necessity with its activities and research: to preserve plastic-based art and design pieces.

The tension between the need to find valid alternatives to an extraordinary material, and to preserve the artworks of the last century underlines how deeply both the qualities and disadvantages of plastic have penetrated into our culture. Most of the objects we use daily are made of plastic, and though the material may take a different form, plastic will remain relevant as we move forward.

With Botanica Studio Formafantasma is giving its personal homage to plastic materials by investigating the history of polymers.

About the project

Botany, as a discipline, began with early human efforts to identify edible,

medicinal and poisonous plants, making it one of the oldest sciences. More than two centuries ago plants started to be categorized also for their secretions, a possible source of material.

The objects displayed in the Botanica collection are designed as if the oil-based era, in which we are living, never took place. Almost as if historians, Studio Formafantasma investigated the pre-Bakelite period, discovering unexpected textures, feelings and technical possibilities offered by natural polymers extracted from plants or animal-derivatives. The designers researched and hunted for information, digging into the 18th and 19th centuries, when scientists began experimenting draining plants and animals in search for plasticity.

Rosin, Dammar, Copal (a sub-fossil state of amber), Natural Rubber, Shellac (a polymer extracted from insect excrement that colonize trees) and Bois Durci (a 19th century material composed of wood dust and animal blood), are amongst others, materials investigated by the studio. The organic details and plant-like forms of the pieces underline the vegetal and animal origins of the resins, while the palette of colours is based on natural amber tones in combination with traditional materials such as wood, ceramic and metal.

The natural textures and honey-like colours of the resins evoke the memory of 20th century bakelite objects, however, the finish and details are somewhat archaic yet contemporary. In Botanica, plastics are used as precious details, in an attempt to develop a new post-industrial aesthetic.

Today, we can be said to be moving towards a new post-oil era, the pre-oil era is starting to be globally re-discovered in search for alternatives. Online blogs and archives are constantly collating and updating information challenging consumers to produce their own plastics, while an American

University is currently importing Russian Dandelion flowers, reigniting the lost tradition of extracting rubber from the plants roots. In line with this attitude, Studio Formafantasma looks to the past as a source of inspiration, while delivering a body of work with a contemporary twist. With Botanica, Studio Formafantasma offers a new perspective on plasticity, reinterpreting centuries old technology lost beneath the impeccable surface of mass production.

client: PLART FOUNDATION

solo exhibition curated by Marco Petroni

location: SPAZIO ROSSANA ORLANDI, via Matteo Bandello 14-16, Milano

opening time: TUE-SUN 9.00-21.00

Plart Foundation

8, via Martucci

80121 Naples, Italy

t: +39 08119565703

w: plart.it

e: petronimarco@gmail.com, info@plart.it

STUDIO FORMAFANTASMA

Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin are Studio Formafantasma – two Italian designers based in Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

The collaboration between the two started during their BA in communication design, illustrating books and magazines. Their interest in product design developed at the IM master course at Design Academy Eindhoven, where they graduated in July 2009 with a thesis based on traditional Sicilian folk craft.

The work of Studio Formafantasma touches relevant design issues such as the role of design in folk craft, the relationship between tradition and local culture, a critical approach to sustainability, and the significance of objects as a cultural vector.

Andrea and Simone believe in the role of the designer as a bridge between craftwork, industry, user and objects. From this in-between position the studio is interested in creating a design practice that merges craft and industry, local necessity within the global context and on a conceptual level, to stimulate a more critical and conscious relationship of the user with objects.

The aim of the studio is to create in time a coherent body of work both with self-commissioned projects and in collaboration with companies.

Their work has been shown during the Milan and the Dutch Design week, during the ICFE in New York, Design Miami - Basel and at the prestigious auction house Sotheby's.

Works by Formafantasma are currently exhibited at Droog in NY, Rossana Orlandi Gallery in Milan and Moss gallery in NY.



Address: Kronehoefstraat 1 5612 HK, Eindhoven, The Netherlands

t: 0031(0)616295171/0

e: info@formafantasma.com

w: formafantasma.com