**FROM ANTIQUES TO THE DIVINE COMEDY OF COSSOVEL,**

**FROM AUTEUR DESIGN TO QUEEN VICTORIA’S STOCKINGS**

**MECANTEINFIERA, THE CHEST OF CURIOS, STARTS OVER AGAIN**

Parma, 1 October -

After the spring cancellation, Mercanteinfiera, Fiere di Parma’s event dedicated to antiques, vintage collectibles and modern antiques, is back from 3 to 11 October with its trump cards: antiques, modern antiques, vintage collectibles and rare curios. Such as a pair of unexpectedly coy stockings that belonged to Queen Victor and later given to actress Reneé Kelly as a gift, and later bought at a charity auction on 17 February 1930 for 10 guineas, 24 shillings by an unknown Mrs. Garner. Or the Divine Comedy by Francesco Cossovel. A micro-calligraphy transcription written by hand in 1888 without using a magnifier by the typographer from Gorizia who, having a malformation of the optic nerve, managed to write 14,233 verses, about 96 thousand words and 400 thousand letters on a parchment of 48.5 x 96 cm. The original script was lost, but some rare copies made by Cossovel himself are still around.

“This exhibition is an amazing container of relations - stated Ilaria Dazzi, Brand Manager of Mercanteinfiera - but also a boundless quest for unique pieces with which visitors need a direct experience. This is why, after the success of the virtual expo that reached 120 countries with 900 thousand clicks, we decided to go back live. We were followed by 800 exhibitors instead of the usual 1,000, and many buyers”.

Mercanteinfiera has definitely become a reference point for the domestic and international communities, which has been confirmed even in such an unusual year by the presence of buyers from France, Belgium, Britain, Turkey and even America, who will obviously cross the Italian borders complying with the safety protocols in place.

For this 39th edition, the four pavilions of the exhibition will display antique ivory and turtle coin collection cabinets, imposing neoclassical mirrors and 19th-century traditional Trapani vases. Auteur design will be present with universally acclaimed designers acknowledged as “masters”: Gio Ponti, Franco Albini, Iosa Ghini, Joe Colombo and Vico Magistretti, just to mention a few. And more: bureau, Baccarat crystals, liquor cabinets, jewellery and vintage fashion, true and fake marvels featured in the collateral show “The Golden Twenties. Life and fashion of the decade of Les Années Folles dedicated to the 1920s.

Those were the years when Alfonsina Strada took part in the Tour of Italy (1924), Josephine Baker conquered the world with a 16-banana miniskirt, Annemarie Schwarzenbach, Swiss poet and photographer, became a muse of androgynous style with her boyish look. A change of paradigm where jewellery plays a starring role together with shorter dresses. Showy, not costly, easy to change to match dress and mood, and especially affordable for women without having to resort to their husbands’ generosity. Those were the years of emancipation, that’s why they were “roaring”.

As well as period clothes from the Como Silk Museum, Clerici Tessuto and Ostinelli Seta, a wide range of vintage accessories will be on display. Ostrich feather fans, tiny clutches, powder compacts and especially the sautoir necklace. That floating, jangling and long necklaces that Gabriele D’Annunzio used to give to all his lovers and that he called umbilical necklace.

The collateral show is curated by Paolo Aquilini, director of the Como Silk Museum, and by Clara Cappelletti, in collaboration with Fondazione Setificio, Associazione Ex Allievi del Setificio and with the contribution of Ostinelli Seta, Clerici Tessuto, Bianca Cappello (jewellery historian) and Samuele Magri (art historian).

“To me The Golden Twenties is a symbol, rather than exhibition,” says Aquilini. “Just as the Spanish flu, which marked the last century, was followed by years of overwhelming vitality, I want to believe that the pandemic that hit us will be followed by a new Renaissance.

For those who love hunting for rarities through a simple click, Mercanteinfiera Teaser returns with its online platform set up in collaboration with Antico Antico, a Fiere di Parma partner since 2019. This is how it works: after browsing through the best art pieces in preview mode and making a choice, from the comfort of your sofa, you can then go to the fair centre and straight to the relevant exhibitor to evaluate and purchase the object (www.mercanteinfiera.it). The platform closes on October 11.

All the sanitisation and safety protocols put in place by the national Guidelines and AEFI, the Italian Association of the Italian Exhibition Industry, have been implemented for this event.

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