



Press Release

THE SKETCHES OF THE FONTANA SISTERS,
ADRIANO SCOFFONE'S PHOTOGRAPHY.
THE NEW PRIVATE COLLECTION OF FIERE DI PARMA
AND ALESSANDRO VOLTA'S BATTERY.

MERCANTEINFIERA DOUBLES ITS COLLATERAL EXHIBITIONS
AND GETS EVEN BIGGER

*Fiere di Parma,
from 1st to 9th October 2022*

(Parma, 22 June 2022) - Is it possible to enjoy at the same time and in the same place original sketches of dreamy cocktail dresses from the 1960s, exclusive photographs that immortalize pioneers of car racing from the 1930s such as Nuvolari and Varzi, shots by great contemporary photographers, and the famous electric battery invented by Alessandro Volta (1745 - 1827), all against a vast backdrop of antiques and design?

It's only possible at **Mercanteinfiera**, a kind of **Fiere di Parma jam session of antiques, historical design and vintage collectibles running from 1st to 9th October**. Now in its 41st edition, the international event that every year attracts about 100,000 visitors will presents to its public four collateral exhibitions (instead of the traditional two).

*"An undertaking - points out **Ilaria Dazzi, Exhibition Director** - that reflects our continuing commitment to combine our exhibition displays with the goal, on the one hand, to offer an "open" idea of art that includes, for example, fashion design, too often relegated to its commercial value, and, on the other, to cultivate the value of our social history, a cultural heritage in which even the new generations are increasingly interested."*

The collateral exhibitions

"From sketch to archive: the Fontana collection originals" is the fourth scheduled collateral exhibition, a tribute to the Fontana Sisters. The outcome of a collaboration with CSAC, this exhibition aims to tell the story of the creativity of these famous protagonists of Italian High Fashion through a selection of sketches taken from over 6,000 fashion drawings preserved in the archives, at the same time exploring the development of taste and changes in social history. Exemplary roles models of female entrepreneurship and Made in Italy ambassadors, they contributed to popularize the Italian style around the world, thanks partly to a style that suited the world of the cinema.

The exhibition is hosted in Pavilion 7, where Art Parma Fair, an exhibition of Contemporary Art, is taking place at the same time.

"Sparks of genius, Alessandro Volta precursor of sustainability" (Pav. 4) is the title of the second scheduled collateral exhibition, which aims to show how the visionary and abstract dream of this famous Como resident, who invented the battery at a time when nothing worked through electricity, now more than ever continues to revolutionize the world.

Among the rare pieces on display are a rare lithograph by Marcello Dudovich, depicting the 1899 international exhibition on the occasion of the Volta celebrations, and the famous battery made of zinc and copper discs.

The exhibition involved the collaboration of the Como Silk Museum, the Paolo Carcano Silk Factory, Fondazione Setificio, Associazione ex Allievi Setificio of Como, the Civic Museums of Como, the Casartelli Museum, the Alessandro Volta Classical and Scientific High School, Fondazione Alessandro Volta and Società Palchettisti Teatro Sociale of Como.

After the recent success of Mia Photo Fair, new partner of the exhibition centre, another photographic exhibition is coming to Parma, presented by the Swiss watchmakers Eberhard & Co.: **“Those daredevils of the white roads. Nuvolari, Varzi Campari and other heroes of the Cuneo - Colle della Maddalena race”** (Pav. 4), organized by Giosuè Boetto Cohen.

A journey made of images taken from the archive of the material shot by the Piedmontese photographer Adriano Scoffone (1891-1980), immortalizing the Cuneo-Colle della Maddalena races of 1925, 1926, 1927 and 1930.

Ninety years ago, motor racing took place on completely different roads from those of today. The protagonists of the exhibition, therefore, are the drivers depicted in spectacular counter-steering manoeuvres, or pulling away on straight roads and swerving in the dust and, of course, the road itself.

Photography also takes centre stage in **“Number 8: Fiere di Parma collection – Eight works for a new Art Collection”** (Pav. 4). This includes shots by Camilla Borghese, Laetitia Ky, Maddalena Barletta, Regina Anzenberger, Santi Caleca and Gianpiero Fanuli, all part of the Fiere di Parma private collection.

The works were selected by a commission consisting of Fabio Castelli and the following members of CSAC - Study Centre and Communication Archive of Parma: Francesca Zanella, Lucia Miodini, Cristina Casero.

Mercanteinfiera in numbers

1000 exhibitors (20% of whom foreign ones) spread out over four pavilions with an exhibition area of 40,000 sqm.

5000 buyers coming from the USA, France, and China, a sign that the exhibition is now an essential event in global agendas.

These Mercanteinfiera results are the outcome of a long-term strategy that has been able to renew itself and meet new trends in taste, making the exhibition attractive to different audiences, including young people.

Mercanteinfiera, the collection of rare pieces, whether of antiques, historical design, modern antiques or vintage collectibles.

Unique pieces are the distinctive feature of Mercanteinfiera, a space where it is not unusual to find an 18th-century Florentine bas-relief next to a rare early 20th-century fan evoking a burlesque setting. All this may be displayed not far from an eccentric pink opaline perfume bottle from the 1870s or a painting by the famous Ukrainian artist Sonia Delaunay, who revolutionized 20th-century art with the power of colour.

There is the range of historical-auteur design pieces, the production of furniture and home furnishings from the period spanning the later post-war years to the 1980s which involves designers who are globally recognized as “masters”: Gio Ponti, Franco Albini, Iosa Ghini, Joe Colombo and Vico Magistretti, just to mention a few. And then modern antiques, the series of objects that seem to have been abandoned by the flow of life, such as old games from the early 1900s or evocative musical photo albums.

Finally, on display in the four pavilions of the exhibition centre are antiques ranging from the 16th to the 19th century, jewels, watches, including vintage ones (Rolex, Audemars Piguet, Vacheron Constantin, Patek Philippe, Hublot) and fashion of yesteryear.

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