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From Milan to Mayfair

Since its inception 11 years ago, the twentieth-century art and decorative arts fair PAD London has been dominated by British and French galleries. But with the arrival of some new Italian exhibitors, the landscape is changing. BECKY SUNSHINE meets three of them



'I like to discover and grow, to give young designers possibilities'

GALLERIA ROSSANA ORLANDI

Ever since Rossana Orlandi, a former knitwear designer, opened her shop-gallery in a former tie factory in Milan in 2002, she has been labelled one of the world's great tastemakers, a visionary with an eye for the new and experimental. Her main focus is nurturing new talent, a subject for which she has boundless enthusiasm. 'I like to discover and grow, to give young designers possibilities, for them to be known,' she explains. 'I always leave my talent free to create, but then might suggest something like "bigger" or "smaller" or "higher" – something to help them from a commercial point of view. But I leave it absolutely up to them.'

Rossana was an early champion of the Dutch scene. She made stars of designers such as Maarten Baas and Piet Hein Eek, and also Italian studio Formafantasma, all of whom were educated at the influential Design Academy Eindhoven. Her first time showing at PAD London feels like a homecoming of sorts. 'I've had a house in Kensington for the past 12 years,' she says. 'And when I've visited the show in the past, I've found the atmosphere interesting: a great mix of galleries. I'm hoping to see lots of architects, private collectors and interior designers.'

Do not expect Rossana to be bringing any vintage pieces. 'I prefer to work with people who are alive,' she explains. 'I love the dialogue.' Instead, she plans to bring mostly new furniture and a little lighting. There will be a console and chair by Nacho Carbonell, a floor mirror by Damiano Spelta, and works from Guglielmo Poletti and Kiki Lopez. rossanaorlandi.com >

Guglielmo Poletti's
Corten steel and stainless-steel
'Equilibrium Console'

