A store made of cardboard featuring modern lines and born from the creative laboratory of Oliviero Toscani for a sustainable approach to the world of retail

Un negozio in cartone dalle linee moderne ideato dal laboratorio creativo di Oliviero Toscani per un approccio sostenibile al mondo del retail

“Expressing sustainability in retail shops as a paradigm of business”. The conference held last April at the Circolo della Stampa in Milan and organized by POPAI and SCS Azioninnova finely exemplifies the growing need of companies to express their ethical choices and promote initiatives that are increasingly socially-minded within their sales points. But how can a space reflect a lifestyle?

Manas, the shoe manufacturer based in Italy’s Marche region, has decided to embark on an experimental journey by proposing the use of cardboard in its stores. Typically used for temporary displays, cardboard is in this case reinterpreted and raised to a material with permanent status. Arising from the collaboration with La Sterpaia, a workshop on communication created by Oliviero Toscani by merging the concept of creative laboratory with in-depth market knowledge, the project was developed by architect Pietro Carlo Pellegrini. For the event “Città sottili, luoghi e progetti di cartone” (“Subtle cities, places and cardboard projects”) – started in 2001 and promoted by Lucense in an effort to form a network between the world of manufacturing, paper transformation, architecture, design, research and training – Pellegrini had already experimented with using cardboard as a structural element. The seven shops created for Manas (five in Italy and two in China) use two main architectural elements for their displays: slabs and columns. Placed together in a modular fashion, the two create different environments that divide the space. The seating areas, display nooks and wall shelving are all made with seven overlapping layers of triple corrugated cardboard, five of which are made from 100% recycled material and two from pure cellulose fiber. Cardboard tubes made of recycled paper have also been...
used to create the vertical boiserie, which, except for the last layer, is composed of pure cellulose fiber. Depending on the diameter, the boiserie is alternated with wengé wood wall panels and raised display areas that terminate with a circular surface also in wengé. The Manas stores draw inspiration from the Paper House de-signed by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban who in the early 1990s experimented with using cellulose derivatives in architecture. Thanks to the strong impact of the materials, the Manas spaces immediately convey the company's attention to sustainability and at the same time their ongoing search for new materials and, in this case, new uses for traditional materials. And if they decide tomorrow to redesign the space, the cardboard can always be recycled into ever-useful sheets of paper.

In collaboration with Iguzzini, even the lighting system for the displays are made out of cardboard tubes in keeping with the vertical layout of the space. Manas’ Experimental Journey: Cardboard is reinterpreted and raised to permanent furnishing. The project arises from the collaboration with La Sterpaia, a workshop on communication created by Olivier Toscani

MANAS’ EXPERIMENTAL JOURNEY:
CARDBOARD IS REINTERPRETED AND RAISED TO PERMANENT FURNISHING. THE PROJECT ARISES FROM THE COLLABORATION WITH LA STERPAIA, A WORKSHOP ON COMMUNICATION CREATED BY OLIVIER TOSCANI

Un percorso di sperimentazione per Manas: il cartone viene reinterpretato ed elevato ad arredo permanente. Il progetto nasce dalla collaborazione con La Sterpaia, bottega della comunicazione creata da Olivier Toscani

a esclusione dell’ultimo strato costituito da carta in pura cellulosa, è stata realizzata, a seconda del diametro, la boiserie a scansione verticale che si alterna alle pareti rivestite in legno wengè e le alzate espositive, che terminano con un piano circolare nella stessa essenza. Ispirati all’immaginario delle Paper House di Shigeru Ban, l’architetto giapponese che dai primi anni ‘90 sperimenta l’utilizzo architettonico dei derivati della cellulosa, gli spazi Manas trasmettono immediatamente, grazie al forte impatto materico, l’attenzione dell’azienda nei confronti di un approccio sostenibile e al tempo stesso la continua ricerca tecnologica verso nuovi materiali e, come in questo caso, un nuovo utilizzo di materiali tradizionali. E se un domani si decidesse di riprogettare lo spazio vendita, il cartone utilizzato potrà essere interamente utilizzato per la produzione di sempre utili fogli di carta.