

WOMEN IN BALANCE

1955
/ 1965

Donne in
equilibrio

MUSEO
Salvatore Ferragamo

FONDAZIONE FERRAGAMO

WOMEN /1955 IN BALANCE /1965

Donne in equilibrio

**Palazzo Spini Feroni
Firenze**

**20 May 2022
18 April 2023**

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Short film

Marinella Pirelli, *Gioco di dama*,
1961–63. Restored by Home
Movies – Archivio Nazionale
del Film di Famiglia, Bologna
in collaboration with Archivio
Marinella Pirelli

Documentary

Women in Balance: Today
Produced by Rampello &
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Ferragamo
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Video installations

A Mom at the Service of Business; Family Album; Advertising and Family; The Italian Family; Cover Families; Senator Lina Merlin and Virtue; The Profession of Modeling; Women and Carosello, by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini
Female projections, by Stephen Gundle, Rocco Gurrieri, and Irene Montini
Family life, by Home Movies – Archivio Nazionale del Film di Famiglia, Bologna

Graphic design

RovaiWeber design

Exhibition installation

Opera Laboratori Fiorentini, Florence

Installation of clothes

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WOMEN IN ¹⁹⁵⁵/₁₉₆₅ BALANCE

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WOMEN IN ¹⁹⁵⁵/₁₉₆₅ BALANCE

Donne in equilibrio

From 1960 until her death on 19 October 2018, Wanda Miletto Ferragamo was the bright mind and steady hand behind the Salvatore Ferragamo brand, the woman who turned Ferragamo into one of the most quintessential of Italian fashion houses.

In August 1960, when her beloved husband Salvatore died, Wanda made a choice that was cultural, in the fullest sense of the word, to continue the business her husband had left behind, transforming a women's shoe company into a fashion house, where her children could continue the tradition of dedication, innovation and creativity that Salvatore had forged so many years before. Her two eldest daughters, Fiamma and Giovanna, joined the company a few years before their father's death, followed by her sons and youngest daughter Fulvia, who would run the silk division one decade later. Although Wanda Ferragamo was not yet forty and three of her six children were still small, she decided to take up the reins of the company with a solid commitment and a fascinating, personal search for balance between her new working life and her family. The experience of Wanda Ferragamo, one of Italy's first female captains of industry, exemplifies the art of preserving a great artisanal tradition while pursuing robust industrial development. She based her approach on a culture of care, and her work at the company, like her relationships with her children, was inspired by this principle of caring for others. Wanda did not like to talk about herself. She did not put her accomplishments on display – three honorary degrees, recognition for her career and countless international awards. She invariably attributed the value and merit of her success to others, her husband, her children working for the company, her colleagues. And this is why we chose to honour her memory with an exhibition that examines the complexities of what it was to be a woman in Italy between the fifties and sixties, when Wanda changed the course of her life. They were the years that came to be known as the "economic miracle", a time of profound change in Italian society, and we have extended this period to cover the decade between 1955 and 1965, when scores of women were entering different sectors of Italian society. Their shifting reality reveals the complicated and often contradictory path that led not only to the personal affirmation of many women, but to more freedom for all women, helping to build the Italian republic we know today.

Women's presence in Italian history of the fifties and sixties also sheds light on at least some aspects of the country's modernisation, a process in which women are both the subject and object at the same time. Often women who push for change in various social and professional fields also embark, in their private lives, on their own individual search for new ways of being that continue to call into question the present in which we live, as demonstrated by the interviews of women between the ages of 18 and 35 in the video created for the exhibition produced by

Rampello & Partners Creative Studio and directed by Giorgia Benazzo.

Every woman's experience evoked in this exhibition can be interpreted as a unique journey towards the creation of her own way of "being a woman", the product of both the historical context and her personal exploration. The narrative based on the fact that women, entering the public scene, have also found nuanced solutions as they constantly search for new balances between work and family only emphasises the continuous, ingenious and extraordinary creativity that has characterised and continues to distinguish the lives of women, their choices and their different view of the world and life. However, there is no doubt that the gender difference has affected and continues to affect women in thousands of subtle ways, shaping their behaviour, individual ways of being and social relationships.

Women's presence in Italian history is certainly more than a linear narrative about equal rights, greater freedoms and participation in public life, fundamental aspects that, however, do not resolve the complexity of women's participation and the complex relationships that arise as a result. Women face countless compromises and much uncertainty, and the achievement of long pursued goals is shadowed by cultural and emotional legacies. This is not a simple path and the route has often entailed long stops along the way. Thus, we wanted to provide an overview of women's teeming, bustling and fruitful presence in the story of the rights and freedoms that they regained.

In this way, the aim of the exhibition is to trace the activities and choices of women of different ages, including those who gained entry to fields of work previously reserved almost exclusively to men, in order to at least glimpse the tumultuous and complex shift in Italian society which, in this decade, consolidated its democracy and participated, although in different ways and at different rates, in the renewal of lifestyles and role models mostly based on an American way of life, emulating that Western home of democracy and well-being. In addition to making it possible to examine their personal experiences, these women's presence in the professions, the arts and culture, politics and the workforce also sheds light on the longer revolution of contemporary times, that which marked the end of the separation of gender-based roles.

The result of this exhibition is like a puzzle missing quite a few pieces, and the curators, aware of this limit, hope that similar initiatives will overcome it.

The sections evoke contexts that serve as stages/laboratories for the relationships between the genders and generations to show the extraordinary variety of women in history, a group that has never been culturally homogeneous nor monolithic, but always a mix of different social and cultural extractions. Finally, like a look at the dark side of the moon, now only recently and with very few exceptions, interest has turned to studying women, where they are present and active, but often invisible.

In the background lie the many questions created by the pandemic, which has also highlighted the urgent need to more carefully examine gender relationships. To this end, the exhibition at Palazzo Spini Feroni includes a project, which is only virtual for now, developed in collaboration with the Art Curating course of the Istituto Marangoni of Florence. Two female students gathered and discussed the works and testimonies of eleven international women artists born around 1990, for a collective reflection on identity as the central, necessary and inevitable subject of our contemporary condition.

A scene like a domestic space, curated by Maurizio Balò

The new life of the decade between 1955 and 1965, characterised by economic security, also entailed settling into flats, with differences between the social classes.

The home became a private space to be decorated and personalised, with a clear tendency to separate areas, creating more intimate rooms next to more open, practical and functional places. The home became a space that was increasingly part of a woman's identity. She appropriated it and at the same time it projected a part of her. Subjectivity, the tastes of the "lady of the house" and her creativity all came into play. The furnishings, the objects and even the daily routine indicated certain changes in the homes of Italians.

This is why the stage set by scenographer Maurizio Balò is inspired by the home of a bourgeois family of the period, represented here with a dollhouse from the early sixties, from Fondazione Paolo Franzini Tibaldeo-Museo del Giocattolo di Cormano (Milan). The themes of the sections correspond with the rooms in this ideal home: the laundry room, the library, the attic, the kitchen, the living room, the teenagers' bedroom and the wardrobe.

The only space that does not fit into this series is the first room welcoming visitors to the exhibition, the office of Wanda Ferragamo, overlooking Piazza S. Trinita. The furniture and details are sketched as in the views of Italian cities which decorated the Settebello train, a genuine icon of Italy during the economic boom, which gave the world a new image of the country. Each section features quotes by Wanda Ferragamo, taken from her many writings.

The sections of the exhibition

Section I: Wanda Miletta Ferragamo, a woman in balance

"I had never worked before in my life and I had no idea where to begin. Moreover, I had no training for it. Until then I had taken care of our home and the children; that was as far as a woman's education went in my time. Now there was only one head of the family and the company, and that was I. It was a challenge to achieve a balance between the responsibilities of educating children while learning my new role in the company. It was like a magic trick and I became an expert. I would be trying to focus on a new product line and two seconds later I had to answer my six children's requests. How did I want to be remembered? Above all, as a mother, a mother who had taken up business."

Wanda Ferragamo

The first part of the exhibition is devoted to Wanda Miletta Ferragamo with an idealised reproduction of her office in Palazzo Spini Feroni, Florence, the Salvatore Ferragamo company's headquarters since 1938. It is the only part of the exhibition that transcends the specific historical period considered. Indeed, the room is filled with mementos and documents bearing witness to the life and career of Wanda Ferragamo until the last day of her life, 19 October 2018. Displayed on the large table, a symbolic representation of her desk, are family photos along with the antique ink pot, magnifying glass and document holder that always graced her office, and the large notepad where Wanda would take notes and jot down her thoughts and ideas. The "W" bag that Fiamma, Salvatore and Wanda Ferragamo's eldest daughter, had created for her mother in the seventies has been placed on the desk, as if Wanda had just arrived. On the walls hang the honorary degrees she received over the years, a newspaper article dated 1926, which appeared in a Los Angeles publication in Japanese, documenting the desire of the "shoemaker of dreams" to travel to Japan as early as his Hollywood years.

And then there are the photographs of Wanda with famous people, like Pope John Paul II and

Queen Elizabeth, who received her on 15 March 2005 at Buckingham Palace for the state reception held for the President of the Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi.

A glass display holds her most cherished memories: the shoe that Salvatore had made for her in 1940 when they were engaged, featuring an upper like the scales of a fish; the first *Gilio* perfume, with its elegant packaging, launched in 1961; the 18-karat gold shoe created by Salvatore in 1956; the bag and shoe that Fiamma had designed for Princess Diana, a long-time client of the brand.

A video of Wanda Ferragamo remembering the most important moments of her life, meeting Salvatore, her happiest times and the saddest, her courageous choice to take over the company, when her children joined the business in the various divisions.

Around the pillar in the room, bearing witness to the palace's Medieval origins (1289) is a curious installation of women's shoe prototypes from the Salvatore Ferragamo archives, inspired by the first silk scarf designed by Salvatore Ferragamo with the artist Alvaro Monnini, but printed by Ravasi only after his death. These are the models of the first collections designed by Fiamma, which came out after her father had passed away.

The portrait of Salvatore Ferragamo, painted in 1949 by the artist Pietro Annigoni, which Wanda Ferragamo jealously guarded in her office, is paired with a new portrait of the shoemaker by the internationally celebrated artist Claire Tabouret. These two paintings refer to two different eras. Annigoni was a bastion of tradition when the rest of the art world was exploring ways to break with the past. Tabouret, on the other hand, is one of the new leaders of a revival that is not afraid to use the potential of the canvas as a new experiential frontier, in which all periods and all masters may be summoned, then presented according to one's own lexicon.

Video:

Una mamma prestata all'imprenditoria (*A mother in business*), by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini. Run time: 9.20 minutes, colors, 16:9

Images from Archivio Salvatore Ferragamo of Florence and from the video-interview by Daniele Tommaso to Wanda Ferragamo in 2010 on the occasion of the exhibition "A regola d'arte" at Museo Salvatore Ferragamo of Florence

Section II: Families

"What I am most thankful for in the world is that I had a close-knit family. We always shared our energy and experiences and we learned from each other. The harmony of our family is the result of respecting everyone's opinion and listening to one another. I like to think that we are the different arteries leading to the same heart."

Wanda Ferragamo

Between 1955 and 1965, the Italian family was profoundly transformed as migrations and urbanisation emptied the countryside. These factors tore at the fabric of family and social relationships of the past, shrinking the size of families to around four, two parents and two children, the so-called nuclear family.

Daily life became a laboratory of new relationships between generations and genders which were being redefined, a process that obviously did not end in that decade and continues into the present.

Five audio-visual exhibits document the Italian family in this period. *Family life* recounts a few moments in the life of an Italian family: a birthday party, Christmas, children at the park and

holidays in a montage of home movies from the National Film Archive of Bologna, managed by the Home Movies Association; *Family album* shows a few clips of the Ferragamo family's private life; Advertising and family describes how family was an attractive advertising target; *The Italian family*, taken from news reports, shows Italy at the time, reflecting the heterogeneousness of the country; and *Cover families*, with clips of famous families, like the British royal family, Grace Kelly and Prince Ranieri of Monaco and the young Kennedy's, alludes to a stereotype of the ideal nuclear family and the relationships between its members.

These videos highlight the image of women, mostly bourgeois, who express themselves through their clothing and new and unusual habits, like smoking cigarettes or saying that playing with their children is not a "priority". These are important signals of a change in Italian society and feminine identities.

Family life is set in a dining room, with the table in the centre, the symbol of the return home, in this case a table designed in 1965 by Anna Ferrieri Castelli, co-founder with her husband of Kartell, an Italian company that pioneered the production of plastic objects for daily use. On the table we see the Aldo Londi cats, which he created in 1960 and 1961 for Ceramiche Bitossi and in a niche is the Brambilla family, also by Aldo Londi for Bitossi, created in 1960, in a nod to the theme of this room.

Videos:

Vita in famiglia. (*Family life*) Run time 9 minutes, colors, 16:9

Images from Home Movies - Archivio Nazionale del Film di Famiglia, the home movies of the Alfano, Bellavia, Boccafogli, Buffetti, Carrer, Cocchi, Damiata, De Palma, Fusina, Gatti, Longo, Lucchini, Murri, Muston, Nicoletti, Olivo, Osti, Paltrinieri, Pasetti and Ventura families. Compiled by Home Movies - Archivio Nazionale del Film di Famiglia (Bologna)

Album di famiglia (*Family album*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini.

Run time 7.26 minutes, colour, 4:3

Images from the Salvatore Ferragamo Archive and the Ferragamo family. Florence, Museo Salvatore Ferragamo

Pubblicità e famiglia (*Advertising and family*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini. Run time 4 minutes, black and white, 4:3

Images from Istituto Luce, RaiTeche, Archivio Rai of Rome and Archivio Nazionale Cinema e Impresa of Ivrea

La famiglia italiana (*The Italian family*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini.

Run time 9.10 minutes, black and white, 4:3

Images from Istituto Luce, RaiTeche and Archivio Rai of Rome

Famiglie da copertina (*Cover families*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini. Run time 4 minutes, black and white, 4:3

Images from Istituto Luce, RaiTeche and Archivio Rai of Rome

Section III: Women's work

"I am convinced that a woman must have a job to which she can devote her energies. This is why I encouraged my daughters to work. All women work, the only difference is that some do their work outside the home. In any case, homemakers need to keep the books like an accountant, decorate like an interior designer, cook like a chef and run their home like a CEO, and they must do all this while also working as a wife and mother. We women do everything, it doesn't matter what and where our offices are."

Wanda Ferragamo

The constitutional right to work and the affirmation of the centrality of the individual - man or woman - as the beneficiary of rights were crucial points for Senator Angela Merlin. However, we often associate her name with the law to abolish the prostitution regulation (20 February 1958), referred to in this part of the exhibition. It was a measure that, from various perspectives, charted the course of Italian society to a fully democratic harbour.

This was the decade in which women joined the workforce, officially numbering in the millions. Others worked from home and were not counted. Many blue and white collar women workers joined the telecommunication sectors, the production of electrical devices or plastics, while others opted for new jobs as hostesses, interpreters or models, in which care for the body and an attractive appearance gave them a leg up.

There are few women in the scientific disciplines, despite their value. There are fewer women engineers than women architects and the percentage of female doctors remains modest. Even the world of scientific research is male, and women, though they've made their way in, have overcome great difficulty to do so, while it was not until 1963 that they were permitted to work as public prosecutors.

Nonetheless, there are women who have made a name for themselves, for whom hard work, creativity and the environment in which they found themselves played a crucial role. We see the emergence of women to whom businesses were passed down, more than in the past, with these women contributing new ideas and new business models.

This section is set in a home library. Each module of the bookshelf created here refers to one or two jobs or professions, and the theme is conveyed by a symbolic object that refers to that activity, a photograph of a specific person who excelled in that field or photograph of a group of women who, together, did that job. We find secretaries, switchboard operators, typists, interpreters, television presenters, models, seamstresses, like the Fontana sisters, who, in those years, upgraded their atelier to an industrial scale and organisation when Italian fashion took off. We also see Alitalia airline hostesses, with their uniforms designed in the fifties by the same Fontana sisters and in 1964 by Delia Biagiotti. Policewomen, a new division of the State Police established in 1958, are represented by their uniform. Ample space is devoted to women designers - architects who in this period made a name for themselves in a field that until a few years earlier had been reserved exclusively to men, and so we have Gae Aulenti, Carla Badioli, Renata Bonfanti, Gegia Bronzini, Antonia Campi and Franca Helg. Fashion illustrators are represented by Brunetta, an adaptable and ironic artist, and the graphic artist Lora Lamm, Swiss-born but Italian by adoption, who helped create the image of Rinascente, the department store with an eye on the future. And there are businesswomen like Renata Brion, owner of Brionvega, and Angela Maria Barbizzoli di Campari, who managed her companies after her husband's death, with a destiny similar to Wanda Ferragamo's. From the region of Campania, there is Vincenza Cassetta, daughter of Giuseppe, an artist of the Vietri school. She married the potter Francesco De Maio, also a descendent of a family with a long tradition of terracotta production, and

together they founded Ceramica di Vietri Francesco De Maio in 1963. Another module is dedicated to Anna Bonomi Bolchini, who imported Postal Market from America, introducing mail order sales to Italy and thereby contributing to the democratization of consumption, and one is devoted to Giulia Fontanesi Maramotti, founder of a sewing school in Emilia Romagna for women and various professionals, including men. This was the start of what would come to be one of the first apparel finishing companies, Max Mara. Yet another module is dedicated to Deanna Ferretti and her knitwear company, which was the benchmark for all great fashion designers in Italy and abroad. Women are a prominent exception to the Italian literary tradition's neglect of the novel. Women often write for women, like the authors of romance novels, although they are also capable of reaching the mass market, producing best sellers, and even inventing sinister and unusual plots, like the Giussani sisters, who wrote the most famous Italian noir graphic comic, *Diabolik*, first created in 1962.

But women have also risen to the status of near institutions in the Italian literary world, and so a chapter is devoted to the Premio Strega, the prestigious literary award established by Maria Bellonci and her husband, the critic Goffredo Bellonci. In the decade considered, the winners of the award included Elsa Morante with *L'isola di Arturo* in 1957 and Natalia Ginzburg with *Lessico familiare* in 1963, while Anna Banti came in second with *Le mosche d'oro* the year before. The manuscripts of these three novels are shown in the exhibition.

Journalists have also played an important role, not only capturing changes of all shapes and sizes, as documented in the letters pages of magazines, in which they reveal difficult situations and serve as the spokespeople for the discomfort of women, still veiled in silence. They have helped millions of women find themselves and their independence, giving, through their words, legitimacy to women's dreams and substance to their uncertainties. A few examples are Gabriella Parca, Anna Garofalo, Camilla Cederna, Mariella Gasperini, Irene Brin, and even Oriana Fallaci.

In the sciences, there are women biologists, chemists and doctors. Two important women, Emma Castelnuovo and Marisa Bellisario, have distinguished themselves in these fields, with Castelnuovo studying mathematics in that period and rising to national and international fame as a teacher and communicator of mathematics. She saw, in the discipline, that knowledge could increase discrimination between people of different social classes and, therefore, found that education was the best way to eliminate inequality. Her approach to teaching was to let her students experiment freely. Maria Bellisario joined Olivetti in 1959 and programmed the Elea 9003, the Italian electronic dream, the first commercial transistor computer made in Italy and one of the first in the world, with a console designed by Ettore Sottsass Jr.

A three-minute animated film, *Gioco di dama* (1961-1963) is also featured in the exhibition. Innovative among Italian films of that era in terms of form, the film was shot by Marinella Marinelli (who married into the Pirelli family), the greatest experimenter with a film camera in post-war Italy and one of the few film-makers in an industry in which women were mostly costume designers and script supervisors (which is also how Lina Wertmüller got her start), editors, or actresses. Women filled the screen and the magazines, but faced challenges getting behind the camera. Exceptions to this rule were a few writers and screenwriters, like Suso Cecchi D'Amico and Alba de Céspedes, or photographers who soon became documentary film-makers, as in the case of Cecilia Mangini.

In the centre of this section are six women photographers: Lisetta Carmi, Carla Cerati, Giulia Niccolai, Marisa Rastrellini, Lori Sammartino and Chiara Samugheo. Their work created a varied and multi-faceted picture of the thousands of faces that made up Italy in this decade, from North to South, from the petite to moyenne bourgeoisie, or even the working class.

Videos:

La Senatrice e la virtù (Lina Merlin) (*The Senator and virtue – Lina Merlin*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini. Run time 4.20 minute, black and white, 4:3

Images from Istituto Luce, Archivio Rai and *Adua e le compagne* by Antonio Pietrangeli (1960)

Professione indossatrice (*The modelling profession*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini.

Run time 7 minutes, colour, 4:3

Images from Istituto Luce, Archivio Rai, RaiTeche of Rome, *Sei donne per l'assassino* by Mario Bava (1964) and *Le ragazze di Piazza di Spagna* by Luciano Emmer (1951)

Short film:

Marinella Pirelli, *Gioco di Dama*, 1961-1963, Run time 3'42", 16mm, sound, colour

Restored by: Home Movies - Archivio Nazionale del Film di Famiglia, Bologna

In collaboration with Archivio Marinella Pirelli

Section IV: Giosetta Fioroni, an artist period

"Study, learn, read to gain notions and concepts. Culture and art will help you understand and overcome many hard times in life."

Wanda Ferragamo

This section of the exhibition focuses on the artist's profession through works by Giosetta Fioroni. It recreates the attic of a house, because women artists could rarely afford a studio of their own and had to work at home. Indeed, Giosetta Fioroni worked in a Paris attic.

"Carlo Cardazzo had put together a series of paintings for a Milanese collector... The collector showed up and said, 'I don't buy paintings by women because then they marry and have children'. It was then that I understood the terrible prejudice we'd need to overcome in this profession," This is how Giosetta Fioroni describes the start of her career, when she decided to become "an artist, not a 'woman artist', because art speaks of the beyond and has no gender."

Giosetta avoided drawing attention to any kind of gender issue because she did not want to be relegated to any category, which for women meant losing value, a conviction shared by other women writers and artists of her time. She meant to stake a claim as a full-fledged artist, which was the only way to reach the edge of the beyond with total freedom. Combining biographical information with historical data and news reports, she created a linguistic structure to talk about herself and the world around her without ever sinking into a chronicle-like account of her time.

Born in Rome in 1932, Giosetta studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, where one of her teachers was Toti Scialoja. In 1956 she began attending the Scuola di Piazza del Popolo with Tano Festa, Mario Schifano and Franco Angeli, a group of artists that gravitated around the art gallery La Tartaruga. Between 1959 and 1963 she divided her time between Paris and Rome, frequenting some of the leaders of the cultural scene, like Giuseppe Capogrossi, Alberto Burri, her friend Cy Twombly, the Canadian Jean-Paul Riopelle and the American Joan Mitchell.

Her early works, like *Alba*, 1957, were influenced by the informal/abstract painting that characterised most aesthetic discussion in the post-war period, developing a sense of matter created by amassing and layering. An introspective dynamic marked a break in 1959, in which it was no longer the matter that counted as much as it was the image in a reference to life. The home was the founding core of Fioroni's poetics, in which simple objects mingled with words, signs and symbols of her private life. She alternated these pieces, in which silver appears as an

element of separation from the past, with more complex paintings like *Interni famigliari*. As she proceeded in this direction, Giosetta began using car enamel as an anti-academy element, and stripping her images to the bone, so that they became “transparencies of feelings”, as the writer Goffredo Parise, her partner, defined them.

Figures began appearing as the protagonists of her paintings in the sixties. Giosetta popularised artistic jargon, capturing faces, biographies, art history and gossip column references in a sort of film continuum, while always maintaining that sense of speed and movement of certain Futurist masters and the style of advertising. 1964 marked the start of Italian Pop Art, shown at the Venice Biennale with Tano Festa, Franco Angeli, Mario Schifano and Titina Maselli. Unlike the American Pop Artists, who exploited technological replication through silk-screen printing, Fioroni did not give up the manuality of working with her tripod: she projected transparent slides onto her canvass and then painted the subjects. The nod to film can be seen in her duplications, as in the Op (Optical) variations of Botticelli’s Venus, and with it a certain sentimentality, tied to the memory and to the stories of the old masters.

Portraits fulfilled Giosetta’s need to encounter, assess, play and entertain herself. She painted the faces that appeared in illustrated news magazines, the Roman dolce vita, especially the women, their beauty and their sensuality, in addition to the many faces of Goffredo Parise at home. Every portrait was a piece of her ongoing self-portrait.

Section V and Section VI: The home is a woman’s kingdom and the kitchen its capital

“The home is a reflection of the people who live in it, of the love they put in things. The home is like a person. If it isn’t disciplined and loving, everything falls apart.”

Wanda Ferragamo

These two sections of the exhibition are set in the laundry room and kitchen. In the first, we see carpet beaters lined up to an excessive degree of tidiness (1960) and the dustpan with a long handle (1957) in coloured plastic, designed by Gino Colombini for Kartell, the electric floor cleaner by Giuseppe De Goetzen for Elchim (1954) and the Spatler vacuum cleaner by Achille Castiglioni for Rem (1956).

In the fifties and sixties, advertising leaned heavily on the depiction of lifestyles that encouraged the consumption of new and different products mainly targeting women and housekeeping. Magazines and television advertisements on the popular show *Carosello*, which first aired in 1957, presented a new intimacy of the home like a self-referential universe in which to try out new things that would fill the time and denote a certain economic status. It was a new emotional marketing tool that offered consumers a domestic life inspired by bourgeois models, and it is alluded to here in a montage of famous films playing inside a symbolic washing machine.

In the next room, the kitchen is a stage where a new kind of housewife works, well coiffed and stylishly dressed, breezy and proud of her ability to manage a complex household. Appliances large and small perform their functions and are arranged in American-style modular units, in which a refrigerator stands, the first appliance to enter the home, as it preserved food, organising it in an orderly manner in small compartments.-

This part of the house reveals a new landscape of shapes, featuring ceramics by Richard Ginori, Laveno, Ceramica Pozzi, with bright colours imitating those made out of a new material, plastic, for food and daily use, as exemplified by the objects created in this period by Kartell and Guzzini. The advertisements shown, Barilla, Campari, Algida, Brodo Star and home appliance brands, from Raccolta Salce of Treviso or the collections of manufacturers or private collectors, highlight

way in which women were now the stars of the home.

More than just a room in the house, the kitchen was the keeper of the culinary expertise developed through knowledge gained. Wanda Ferragamo's cookbook in the centre of this room alludes to the importance of local and family culinary traditions, always intertwined with other tips gained on travels and from friends and acquaintances. It is a fertile combination, reflecting the world that was changing.

Video:

La donna in Carosello (*Women and Carosello ads*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini.

Run time: 10 minutes, black and white, 4:3

Images from Archivio Carosello of Rome, Archivio Nazionale Cinema e Impresa of Ivrea, Archivio Storico Barilla- Parma, Archivio Storico and Museo Birra Peroni of Rome

Section VII: Women on the silver screen

"There were no cinemas in Bonito. I only went to the cinema in Naples on special occasions. Back then stars were considered rare creatures. I never could have imagined that one day I would have known, or that I would even have been friends with, those people I once believed to be unreachable."

Wanda Ferragamo

As the "economic miracle" first began to take shape and the female stars of Italian film began to gain a central role, they seemed to express general discomfort, despite being held back by fear and reticence. Cinema was a privileged place in which openings could be found, but there was also much resistance, all elements connected with the modernisation process and gender relationships.

From various standpoints, film conveyed and reflected a widespread search for the new, but in a context in which conventional models remained extremely influential despite women's political emancipation and new social drives for female stars, all aspects and issues that provoked extensive debate.

Even the settings changed: the camera went from the countryside to the city, where women worked or aspired to do so. There were students, telephone operators, shopgirls, but they were mostly single, because a woman who worked after marriage still caused a stir.

The actresses' bodies began to change and slim down to show another Italy intent on beginning a path to well-being. These "mutating" bodies reflected aesthetic codes that were increasingly urban and international, like Elsa Martinelli in *Donatella* directed by Mario Monicelli (1956). The main character, who worked as a model, was a modern girl striving to improve her position, although she did not turn her nose up at a fairy tale romance.

The compilation of famous Italian films from this era, starring icons of the Italian screen, from Sophia Loren to Stefania Sandrelli, is projected in a living room, on the tripod-mounted screen that families would use back then to watch home movies together.

Proiezioni del femminile (*Onscreen women*) by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini.

Run time: 39 minutes, color,4:3

Scenes from: *Donatella* (Mario Monicelli, 1956); *Il Segno di Venere* (Dino Risi, 1955); *Le signorine della O4* (Gianni Franciolini, 1955); *Bravissimo* (Luigi Filippo D'Amico, 1955); *La romana* (Luigi Zampa, 1954); *La ragazza con la valigia* (Valerio Zurlini, 1961); *Il vedovo* (Dino Risi, 1959); *La visita* (Antonio Pietrangeli, 1963); *La fortuna di essere donna* (Alessandro Blasetti, 1956); *Marisa la civetta* (Mario Bolognini, 1957); *La parmigiana* (Antonio Pietrangeli, 1963); *La bella di Lodi* (Mario Missiroli, 1963); *La cuccagna* (Luciano Salce, 1962); *La voglia matta* (Luciano Salce, 1962); *I dolci inganni* (Alberto Lattuada, 1960); *Io la conoscevo bene* (Antonio Pietrangeli, 1965); *Deserto rosso* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1964).

Section VIII: A little room of one's own

"I worry about young people. It seems to me that they've been overlooked. I see them often without goals, without ideals, without healthy role models, tired of life. One must set objectives, big or small, because they are the great force that motivates us to get up every morning."

Wanda Ferragamo

The teenagers' bedroom evokes the emblematic features of the generation born at the end of the World War II. It's different from the rest of the house. The colours, the radio, the portable record player, like the records, the diary and the walls covered with the stars and singers of the day give us a glimpse of their search for identity and desire to learn about the world. A teen's bedroom is the place she goes to get away from her parents' oversight, to listen to music, read, study and hang out with her friends, confiding her fears and desires in them. However, young women - like their male peers - are attracted to life outside the home. The open window, before the teens' eyes, evokes new forms of freedom and new identities for women. With a time jump, but without changing theme, young women aged 18 to 35 from different social backgrounds, nationalities and sexual orientation, some who work, some who do not, some with children and others who are single, were interviewed to learn about their relationships with identity and family, work and home, aspects that the exhibition explores in the period from 1955 to 1965. The interviews were conducted by Rampello & Partners Creative Studio and they were compiled in one documentary with the title *Women in balance: today*. They describe new and complex relationships between genders and generations, and outline previously undiscovered constellations of attitudes and feelings.

Donne in equilibrio: oggi
(*Women in balance: today*)

Genre: Documentary

Run time: 22 min

Country: Italy

Year: 2022

Language: Italian, English
subtitles

Credits:

A production by:

Rampello & Partners Creative
Studio

For Museo Salvatore
Ferragamo

Concept and Production

Director

Tania Di Bernardo

Executive Producer

Daniele Rampello

Junior Producer

Guja Montanari

Story and Interviews

Chiara di Sante

Director

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Director of Photography

Giancarlo Migliore

Editing & Post-production

Giorgia Benazzo

Make-up Artist and Hair

Stylist

Eleonora Juglair

Set Assistant

Vincenzo Miranda

With the participation of

Giulia Benazzo

Sara Cassia

Giovanna Gavotti

Fatima Koanda

Angelica Leuzzi

Marta Lonati

Giulia Massari

Claudia Moleman

Irene Pollini Giolai

Francesca Pompilio

Giulia Scialanga

Rossella Scialla

Polina Stepanova

Niloofar Yamini

Section IX: Female fashion and identity

"Femininity is the most noble and aristocratic aspect that we women have. I mean courteousness, a gentle tone of voice, the way we present ourselves, our lifestyle. I believe that women must always maintain a touch of femininity, in all occasions, at home and outside the home. Good manners, kind words, a small smile, are immeasurable advantages."

Wanda Ferragamo

By 1955, Italian fashion had established itself abroad and apparel was undergoing a transformation that would lead a new industrial sector to take shape, ready-to-wear, created by a single designer. In fashion, women played a leading role, both as seamstresses, journalists and jewellery designers and as the main targets of magazines and photography.-

Over the years, clothing became more comfortable and took on the shape of bags and trapezoids, with roomy coats or suits. Interest in knitwear and trousers grew. Pumps and stilettos gradually made way for medium heels and ballet flats. Fashion responded to the new identity of a woman who travelled, took the underground, worked and, in every field, took care of her body and wanted to be elegant. This section of the exhibition is set in a wardrobe and features clothing and accessories that are exclusively made in Italy by ateliers managed by women, the high fashion brands, ready-to-wear labels and boutiques that created the image of Italian fashion, like Antonelli, Apem, Biki, Carosa, Cerrato Mode, Curiel, Fernanda Gattinoni, Germana Marucelli, Gallia Peter, Gigliola, Giovanna Ferragamo, Irene Galitzine, Jole Veneziani, Myricae, Max Mara, Mila Schön, Sorelle Fontana, Krizia and Roberta di Camerino. The shoes selected for

this section were made by Salvatore and Fiamma Ferragamo. On the central dressing table we see the jewellery created by Flora Weichmann Savioli who began designing it in the mid-fifties, compelled by the desire to “have a modern piece of jewellery that reflected the way of thinking, of seeing, of being a woman in that moment.”

COLLATERAL PROJECTS

An online exhibition: *A Feminine Lexicon* by Pia Diamandis and Elena Tortelli, students of Arts Curating course of Istituto Marangoni Firenze

Asked to curate a project to be shown alongside the *Women in balance* exhibition presented by Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, two students taking the Arts Curating course at the Istituto Marangoni Firenze, who were born between 1999 and 2000, Pia Diamandis and Elena Tortelli, mentored by Isabella Campagnol, Elisa Canossa, Davide Daninos, Carolina Gestri, Francesca Giulia Tavanti and Enrico Visani, decided to use this opportunity to reflect on and share their experience in the present, gathering the works and testimonies of eleven international female artists born around 1990 for a collective reflection on identity as a central, necessary and inevitable aspect of our contemporary condition. The common thread throughout the artists’ work gathered here is that they all explore the interdependence of language and identity in their own respective lexicons. This exploration is developed through personal experience or the experience of their subjects of their work. The stories that each artist describes, whether they were experienced by the artists themselves or by their subjects, are handled with extreme care and engagement to ensure that the stories are heard. Telling, or portraying, is, in and of itself, an act of care, while at the same time it is a tool to define one’s identity. “If we care for certain people, what happens in the interpersonal exchange with the other person will become part of us,” explained Luigina Mortari in her book “*The Philosophy of Care*”, a text that was frequently cited in the group sessions of this educational project, including by the two curators of *Women in balance*.

“Therefore we may speak of care like a factory of being,” wrote Mortari. This means that the works presented here are translations, metamorphoses, transformations necessary to convert fragments of identity into new aesthetic experiences, new narratives that can be shared through a common language: the visual arts.

Selected artists: Stacey Gillian Abe, Monia Ben Hamouda, Helena Hladilová, Lebohang Kganye, ChongYan Liu, Reba Maybury, Alfiah Rahdini, Haruka Sakaguchi, Griselda San Martin, Johanna Toruño and Alice Visentin.

A book about Wanda Miletta Ferragamo: *Ginevra Visconti, Nel libro rosso di Tà. La vita di Wanda Ferragamo*, with introduction by Melania G. Mazzucco, edited by Laura Bosio, Electa, Milan

The title, *Tà’s red book. Wanda Ferragamo, my grandmother*, refers to the nickname we had for our grandmother, Wanda Miletta Ferragamo, Tà. Her first grandson, Gaetano, the son of Giovanna Ferragamo, gave her the name and she loved it, preferring not to be called granny as she had become a grandmother so young in life. The red book was a leather case that Wanda had given each of her twenty-three grandchildren to hold the messages, letters, essays and newspaper articles that she periodically sent to keep each of us informed about what was happening in the family business or in other parts of world, and sometimes just to encourage us to think about

topics that she believed were important for a young person's education.

Today, although Wanda Ferragamo is a well-known, celebrated figure, there was more to be said about her life story, unassuming yet decisive. Her more intimate side had yet to be explored, to reveal the cardinal points of a journey that was only seemingly simple, to shed light, in a discreet, affectionate and documented way, on the human experience of this intense, principled and passionate woman. The story of her destiny merited the gaze of a granddaughter to tell it, insofar as possible, in a patient attempt to string together, more in emotional than chronological order, memories, anecdotes and episodes: her childhood in Bonito, her years in Florence with her husband and children, the war, her decision to run the company when her husband died despite it still being frowned upon at the time, her global success, her long relationship with the film world, her friendships, faith and loving relationships with her children and their children, her twenty-three grandchildren.

This story has now been told by Ginevra Visconti, the daughter of Fulvia Ferragamo, through the countless letters from an extraordinary grandmother known simply as Tà to Ginevra and her many cousins. The book contains some information that was already known and much more that has never been published until now about one of the most important businesswomen in Italian history.

Salvatore Ferragamo for women in Burkina Faso

To promote women's empowerment, Salvatore Ferragamo has partnered with the Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI) of the International Trade Center (ITC), a technical agency that has a joint mandate with the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. EFI is a United Nations programme that aims to reduce poverty by promoting the creation of sustainable, fairly-paid jobs for artisans from disadvantaged communities, so they can join the production chain of large fashion brands.

The goal of the partnership between Salvatore Ferragamo and EFI is to improve the social and economic conditions of women in Burkina Faso: by financing the purchase of tools and equipment for the weaving and dyeing processes, it will enable a community of around 2,400 women to work, receive a living wage and solid support in building their identity.

Thanks to EFI, the women involved in the project can become economically independent and receive a *carte d'artisan*, a document that they may use to claim their pension, apply for funding and exercise their right to vote, becoming true citizens.

Thanks to the economic independence they gain, the women in this community will have the opportunity to ensure their children receive an adequate education and take on a more respected role within their families and society, improving their quality of life in a country like Burkina Faso, one of the poorest in the world.

The partnership does not focus solely on improving social conditions, but also considers the environmental impact of the weaving and dyeing processes, which are performed manually or using renewable energies, while the cotton is grown with rainwater only. In this way, no emissions are generated.

Support for EFI projects has earned the United Nations' full recognition within the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, an initiative to support coordination between various UN bodies for the promotion of projects and policies that ensure that the fashion value chain contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Salvatore Ferragamo has decided to sponsor EFI's project in Burkina Faso for the next three years to encourage women's emancipation and independence, reducing poverty and gender inequality.

Curricula vitae

The curators:

Ricci, Stefania. With a degree in Literature with an emphasis on Art History from the University of Florence, Stefania Ricci began collaborating with Palazzo Pitti's Galleria del Costume and Pitti Immagine in 1984, curating exhibitions and catalogues like *La Sala Bianca: nascita della moda italiana* (Electa) in 1992 and the Emilio Pucci (Skira) exhibition for the Florence Art and Fashion Biennale in 1996. In 1985, she curated the first retrospective exhibition on Salvatore Ferragamo at Palazzo Strozzi in Florence and the various stops on its world tour: the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (1987), the Los Angeles County Museum (1992), the Sogetsu Kai Foundation in Tokyo (1998) and Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City (2006). It was at this time that she began organising the company's archives. Since 1995, she has been director of Museo Salvatore Ferragamo with responsibility for cultural events around the world, curating all the museum's exhibitions and catalogues, namely *Audrey Hepburn. The woman, the style* (Leonardo Arte, 1999), *Evolving Legend Salvatore Ferragamo 1928-2008* (Skira, 2008), *Greta Garbo. The mystery of style* (Skira, 2010), *Marilyn* (Skira, 2012), *Shoemaker of Dreams* (Skira, 2013), *Equilibrium* (Skira, 2014), *A palace and the city* (Skira, 2015), *Across art and fashion* (Mandragora, 2016), *1927 The Return to Italy* (Skira, 2017), *Italy in Hollywood* (Skira, 2018), *Sustainable Thinking* (Electa, 2019) and *Silk* (Electa, 2021). In 2019, Stefania Ricci was named a member of the research committee for the development of public policies to protect, preserve, enhance and use Italian fashion as a cultural asset. She has been the director of Fondazione Ferragamo since 2013.

Valleri, Elvira. A scholar of the Società Italiana delle Storiche (Italian Society of Woman Historians) and formerly a lecturer at the University of Florence and Pisa for its specialisation courses, Elvira Valleri is an expert in autobiographical writings and texts on women's associations in Republican Italy. Her most recent studies in this respect include a paper titled *Un'associazione per le elettrici tra New York e Roma*, in *Elette ed Eletti. Rappresentanza e rappresentazioni di genere nell'Italia repubblicana*, Rubettino Rome 2020. She was a researcher at Istituto Universitario Europeo (European University Institute) in Florence and with the Department of History - University of Essex - Colchester (Essex G.B), for the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (national research council, "CNR") and at other European and non-European research institutions. For several years, she has advised Museo Salvatore Ferragamo on exhibitions, catalogues and documentaries, most recently the doc-film by Luca Guadagnino, *Salvatore -The shoemaker of dreams*.

Set designer:

Maurizio Balò. Having studied Architecture at the University of Florence, where he began his scenography work with the university theatre group, since 1975, Maurizio Balò has designed sets and costumes for many theatrical productions at the most important Italian theatres. In particular, he has designed sets for the director Massimo Castri (plays by Pirandello, Ibsen, Goldoni, Pasolini and others) at public theatres in Rome, Turin, Umbria and Emilia-Romagna. For *La damnation de Faust* by Berlioz at the Teatro Comunale of Bologna in 1982, Balò designed his first opera set. Next came productions for a number of opera companies: Teatro alla Scala

in Milan, Teatro La Fenice in Venice, Teatro San Carlo in Naples, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Opéra Bastille in Paris, the Verona Arena, Opernhaus in Zurich, the Metropolitan Theater of New York, Teatro la Maestranza in Seville, Teatro Regio in Turin, Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Palau de las Artes in Valencia, the San Francisco Opera, Teatro dell'Opera in Rome, the Greek National Theater in Athens and others. Many of these were productions for the directors Giancarlo Cobelli and Werner Herzog. In 1983, he received an award at the Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space in Prague for *La damnation de Faust di Berlioz*. Later, in Italy, he won five Ubu awards (in 1994 for *Electra* by Euripides; in 1997 for *Il ritorno dalla villeggiatura* by Goldoni; in 1998 for *Orgia* by Pasolini; in 2002 for *Madame De Sade* by Yukio Mishima and *John Gabriel Borkman* by Henrik Ibsen; in 2011 for *Le Misanthrope* by Molière); two E.T.I.-Gli Olimpici del Teatro awards (in 2003 for *John Gabriel Borkman* by Henrik Ibsen and *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller; in 2004 for *Questa sera si recita a soggetto* and *Quando si è qualcuno* both by Pirandello); two Le Maschere del Teatro awards (in 2011 for *Andromache* by Euripides and in 2014 for *Anthony and Cleopatra* by Shakespeare). Furthermore, he received the Samaritani award for *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner in 2000, the award of the Associazione Nazionale dei Critici di Teatro (national association of theatre critics) for *Three Sisters* by Anton Chechov in 2008 and the international Cinearti award "La chioma di Berenice" for the set design of *Porcile* by Pasolini in 2009. For Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, Maurizio Balò designed the exhibitions *Audrey Hepburn. The woman, the style* (1999-2001), *Greta Garbo. The mystery of style* (2010), *A palace and the city* (2015), *1927 The Return to Italy* (2017) and *Italy in Hollywood* (2018) which also travelled to other museums in Italy and abroad.

Portrait of Wanda Ferragamo, the artist Claire Tabouret:

Born in 1981 in Pertuis, France, Claire Tabouret graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and studied at Cooper Union in New York in 2005. She currently lives and works in Los Angeles. Her work has been shown in a number of museum exhibitions including: Musée Picasso, Paris, France; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, France; Collection Lambert, Avignon, France; Villa Medici, Rome, Italy; Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China; Palazzo Fruscione, Salerno, Italy; The Drawing Center, New York, USA; Hangar à Bananes, Nantes, France; Palazzo Grassi, Venice, Italy; Maison Guerlain, Paris, France. Claire Tabouret's work is also part of the collections of major museums around the world, including LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art); the Dallas Museum of Art; the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; the Perez Art Museum of Miami; the Institute of Contemporary Art in Miami; the Columbus Museum of Art; the Pinault Collection; the Yuz Museum; FRAC Auvergne; FRAC Hatue-Normandie; the Agnès b Collection; the Emerige Collection; the Leuwen Foundation and the Tel Aviv Museum of Art.

The videos in the exhibition by Rocco Gurrieri and Irene Montini:

Irene Montini and Rocco Gurrieri began collaborating as directors and photographers in 2017. Since then, they have worked together on short films, photography projects, fashion films and experimental animation for museums, brands and magazines, namely Museo Novecento, Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, Disney Studios, Luisa via Roma, Nike, Ferragamo, Reebok, "Vice", "I-D", "Sleek Magazine", "Schön! Magazine", "Contributor Magazine", "Dazed Beauty", "INFRINGE", "loom-est", "Navel Magazine", "JUST", "PAP" and "WRPD Magazine". Their work has been published and reviewed in "Art Tribune", "Vogue", "La Repubblica", "Corriere della Sera", "La Nazione" and "Io donna". In 2019, they directed the *Sustainable Thinking* documentary for Museo Salvatore Ferragamo and shot the fashion section of the exhibition of the same name. In the following year they opened their first solo show *Incanto* at Museo

Novecento in Florence, curated by Sergio Risaliti. In 2021, they contributed to in Museo Salvatore Ferragamo's *Silk* exhibition curated by Stefania Ricci with their short film *Look back Anouk*, which was selected to compete in six of the top film festivals and was named a finalist in both the Milan Fashion Film Festival and the London Fashion Film Festival.

The book on Wanda Miletti Ferragamo:

Ginevra Visconti. Born in Milan in 1975, Ginevra Visconti is married and has two children. She studied Modern Literature at the State University of Milan and wrote her thesis on Italian journalism in Argentina. She then earned a master's degree in journalism at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella in Buenos Aires, where she lived for over a decade and worked for the newspaper "La Nación".

In 2011, to celebrate Wanda Ferragamo's ninetieth birthday, Ginevra gave her grandmother the first version of the biographical novel *Nel libro rosso di Tà*, a very few copies of which were printed.

After returning to Italy in 2014, Ginevra Visconti freelanced for various publications in Italy ("AD Italia" and "Linkiesta") and abroad ("Yo Dona España" and "La Nación Revista") and earned a master's degree in Agribusiness at the Luigi Bocconi University in Milan. She currently runs a farming business, raises horses and, since 2017, has been on the Italian women's polo team.

Melania G. Mazzucco. Born in Rome, Melania G. Mazzucco's fiction debut was *Il bacio della Medusa* (1996), followed by *La camera di Baltus* (1998). In 2000, she published *Lei così amata*, a novel dedicated to the Swiss writer Annemarie Schwarzenbach, which won the Napoli award. In *Vita* (2003), she reinvented her family's story of emigrating to America in a picaresque, fantastical novel that won the Strega award and the international Arcebispo Juan de San Clemente award for best foreign novel published in Spain in 2004-2005. Named the *Globe & Mail* Book of the Year in 2005, it was an Editors' Choice in the New York Times Book Review and one of the Publishers Weekly Top Ten Books of the Year (the only non-English language novel in the top ten).

In 2005, Melania G. Mazzucco published *Un giorno perfetto*, which was made into a film with the same name, directed by Ferzan Ozpetek. A scholar and lover of art, to the Venetian painter Tintoretto she dedicated the novel *La lunga attesa dell'angelo* (2008, Bagutta award, Scanno award, award of the Rome Libraries), and the biography *Jacomo Tintoretto e i suoi figli. Storia di una famiglia veneziana* (2009, Benedetto Croce award, Luigi Russo award, Palmi award, Comisso award). In February 2012, she wrote a biographical essay and the texts for the large exhibition on Tintoretto at the Scuderie del Quirinale.

In 2012, Mazzucco published the novel *Limbo* (Elsa Morante award, Rhegium Julii award, Matteotti award, Bottari Lattes Grinzane award) and *Il bassotto e la Regina* (Frignano Ragazzi award), a Christmas story illustrated by Alessandro Sanna; in 2013, she published the novel *Sei come sei* (Molinello 2014 award) and in 2016, she published *Io sono con te. Storia di Brigitte* (Fahrenheit book of the year). Her most recent novel is *L'architettrice* (2019, Alassio award, Capalbio award, Alassio "An author for Europe award", Corrado Alvaro and Libero Bigiaretti award, Eroine d'Oggi award, Stresa award, Mastercard award, Manzoni award, Righetto award and Friuli Venezia Giulia award).

In 2013, she wrote about 52 masterpieces of art in the Sunday edition page *Il museo del mondo* in "la Repubblica". Her articles were published in a book in 2014 and she won the Città delle Rose award for them in 2015.

Melania G. Mazzucco is the winner of the Viareggio-Tobino 2011 literary award, the Vittorio De Sica 2011 award for literature, the Ignazio Silone 2013 award and Bocconi University's 2016 Dante d'oro award. In 2016, she was named honorary member of Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice and received the scroll of honorary sister. Her book *Io sono con te. Storia di Brigitte* was voted the Fahrenheit book of the year (Rai Radio 3) and won the Basilicata literary award for fiction 2017. In 2020, she won the John Fante career award and in 2021, she received the Friuli Venezia Giulia region's award for her long story *Fuoco infinito*.

In 2021, she collaborated on the exhibition *Una rivoluzione silenziosa. Plautilla Bricci pittrice e architettrice* curated by Yuri Primarosa (Gallerie Nazionali d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Corsini, Rome, 4 November 2021-19 April 2022), writing a new biography of the artist (*Una certa donna che vive ancora*) and the index for the catalogue (Officina Libraria, 2021).

She has written for film, theatre and the radio. The Teatro Stabile of Turin production of her comedy *Una pallida felicità. Un anno nella vita di Giovanni Pascoli*, written with Luigi Guarnieri (1995) was performed in many Italian cities. She won the IDI gold medal for Italian drama in 1996 and was published in "Hystrio", 1995, VIII, no. 4, October/December, pp. 139-151. It was also proposed for a stage reading at Teatro Argentina in Rome (2015) directed by Piero Maccarinelli, with Galatea Ranzi, Valentina Sperli and Giulio Scarpati.

Her work for the radio includes *La vita assassina* (1997, RAI Radio 2), *Requiem per la scrittrice Mila B.* (1998, RAI Radio2) and *Dhulan la sposa* (2001, RAI Radio 3). Winner of the international award Prix Italia 2001, it was produced and broadcast in the national languages of seven European countries, including Germany, Ireland and Slovakia, and she was published in *Sipario*, 2001, no. 623, April, pp. 49-58.

Mazzucco's work has been translated in 28 countries. She has published articles, reports and stories in many newspapers ("Il Sole 24 Ore", "Corriere della Sera", "il manifesto", "Il Messaggero" and "Nuovi Argomenti"), collaborates with "la Repubblica" and is regularly invited to hold conferences at major Italian and foreign universities. She developed the idea for and wrote the docu-film *Tintoretto. Un ribelle a Venezia* (2019), an original Sky Arte production successfully distributed in Italian cinemas and around the world. She is one of the writers featured in the anthology *Ferite* (2021).

Laura Bosio. Writer and editor, Laura Bosio lives in Milan. She has published, among other things: *I dimenticati* (Feltrinelli 1993, Premio Bagutta Opera prima), *Annunciazione. Storia di una fascinazione* (Mondadori 1997, European Moravia award; new edition Longanesi 2008), *Le ali ai piedi* (Mondadori 2002), *Le stagioni dell'acqua* (Longanesi 2007, Finalist for the Strega award), *Le notti sembravano di luna* (Longanesi 2011), *D'amore e di ragione. Donne e spiritualità* (Laterza 2012), *Per seguire la mia stella* (with Bruno Nacci, Guanda 2017), *La casa degli uccelli* (with Bruno Nacci, Guanda 2020) and most recently *Erba matta* (Collana Il bosco degli scrittori, Aboca 2021). Since 2015, she has managed Penny Wirton Milan, an Italian language school for immigrants. Inspired by this experience, Laura Bosio wrote *Una scuola senza muri* (Enrico Damiani Editore 2019). She has taught writing as part of the Master of Journalism program at Università Cattolica of Milan.

***Donne in equilibrio: oggi (Women in balance: today)*, a documentary by Giorgia Benazzo (a Rampello & Partners Creative Studio production; art director Davide Rampello):**

Giorgia Benazzo. Having studied Media Design & Multimedia Arts at the NABA in Milan, Giorgia Benazzo began working with audio-video and photography as creative & art director, film director and photographer.

Fascinated by the singular, she explores the connection between the mind and vision to create images and imaginings that empathetically engage the viewer, such as her works *The Aftertaste* and *22*.

For years she has collaborated with international brands like Cartier, Ermanno Scervino, Nike, Vodafone and Panasonic, to name a few, developing her creative aesthetic across fashion, advertising and art studies.

Davide Rampello. University Professor, cultural and management adviser for national and international institutions, art director and curator, Davide Rampello began his career at Rai in the 70s as a researcher, writer and, later, director of cultural programs and a television director. Between 1992 and 1994, he was the art director of the Venice Carnevale, curating major exhibitions in different spaces in the 90s, like the Biennale and the Galleria dell'Accademia in Venice and Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara. Between 2002 and 2003, he was head of communication, image promotion and cultural events at Teatro Massimo in Palermo and (until 2006) art director of the city of Palermo.

Between 1999 and 2004, he was professor of "Theories and techniques of image promotion" in the department of Literature and Philosophy of the University of Padua and Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore from 2004 to 2006. Between 2004 and 2013, he taught several university courses on promoting image and artistic-cultural events and art for the masses at IULM University in Milan, where he headed an Executive Master program on Communication in Territorial Identities that began in early October 2020.

Rampello was president of the Milan Triennale from 2003 to 2012, a nearly ten-year period over the course of which the image and activities of the Milanese institution were relaunched and updated internationally. In 2010, he curated the Italian Pavilion of Expo 2010 Shanghai - with the theme "The city of man" - and in 2011, he curated the exhibition *Tradition and Innovation*, also at the Italian Pavilion of the Expo 2010 Shanghai, which became a permanent site for the promotion of Italy's image in China. Between 2011 and 2015, he was art director of the Venice Carnevale, while from 2012 to 2015, he was the designer and curator of Pavilion Zero at Expo 2015 Milan. Since 2017, he has been art director of Rampello & Partners, for which he has curated various projects in recent years, including the event devoted to Made in Italy excellence, "Milano XL", the exhibition *Memory and Contemporaneity* developed for the 57th edition of the Venice Art Biennale, the concept and artistic direction for the Italian Pavilion at Expo 2021 Dubai and the installation for the Milan Salone del Mobile in 2019 "De-Signo".

In 2020, Davide Rampello was named art director of the Italian Pavilion at Expo 2021 Dubai.

Rampello & Partners Creative Studio. A creative firm in Milan that handles the art direction and production of exhibitions, installations, events, festivals and cultural communication and projects. The firm translates stories into immersive experiences, developing storytelling concepts for companies and public and private institutions. Founded by Davide Rampello, it has curated and produced exhibitions, events and cultural communication projects for many brands and institutions in Italy and abroad. The firm's main projects include: Pavilion Zero at Expo 2015

Milan, the Italian Pavilion at Expo 2021 Dubai, story-telling and immersive installations for the 2019 and 2022 Salone del Mobile, in addition to cultural communication projects for brands like Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A., Automobili Lamborghini S.p.A., Value Retail Management S.p.A. (Fidenza Village), Technogym S.p.A., Salvatore Ferragamo S.p.A. and institutions like FIPE, Enit, ICE, the Region of Tuscany, CNR and Fondazione Altagamma, as well as advanced training on how to capitalise on territories, like the Executive Master in Communication of local identities promoted by the Region of Lombardy with IULM University.

Online exhibition *A Feminine Lexicon*, in collaboration with Istituto Marangoni Firenze, curated by Pia Diamandis and Elena Tortelli

Istituto Marangoni. Founded in 1935 in Milan as the Istituto Artistico dell'Abbigliamento Marangoni, Istituto Marangoni has successfully trained top professionals in fashion, art and design for over 85 years. With a training track record of four generations of students from 5 continents, Istituto Marangoni has been the launch pad for more than 45,000 luxury industry professionals, including Domenico Dolce, Alessandro Sartori, Paula Cademartori, Gilda Ambrosio, Julie de Libran and Nicola Brognano. It currently counts around 4,000 students per year from 107 different countries in the schools in Milan (School of Fashion and School of Design), Florence (School of Fashion & Art), Paris, London, Mumbai, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Miami, the international capitals of fashion, art and design.

Istituto Marangoni Firenze is based in the heart of Florence, amid the city's great masterpieces of art and culture. Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance, is also a hotbed for fashion and contemporary art. Situated on the elegant Via de' Tornabuoni, renowned for its luxury fashion boutiques and top designer brands, the school is a few steps away from the Gucci and Ferragamo museums and prestigious historical monuments, including Palazzo Strozzi, the Uffizi and Palazzo Pitti.

Istituto Marangoni Firenze is a school that trains talented young students aspiring to careers in fashion and the arts. In addition to a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in all Fashion Design, Styling and Business areas and the Multimedia Arts and Art Curating & Business programs, the Florentine school offers a range of accredited, intensive Luxury Accessory Design and Shoe Design courses taught with a methodology of direct training based on the production and manufacturing of prestigious brands. The school is recognised for counting among its instructors renowned professionals with highly specialised expertise and know-how in the art of making things.

The school offers an extensive program of courses and laboratories to develop individual skills, plus exclusive workshops with international designers.

With its large community of young students and unique combination of history, tradition, art and fashion, Florence is the perfect place for Istituto Marangoni to teach fashion and art in their most sophisticated expressions, educating the professionals of tomorrow to understand the past and transform the future.

Pia Diamandis, student of the Arts Curating course at Istituto Marangoni Firenze. Born in Jakarta in 1999, Pia Diamandis is a writer/researcher and curator of horror films and contemporary art, which drive her interest for social issues. She is currently completing curatorial studies at Istituto Marangoni Firenze while working as an assistant to international director Timo Tjahjanto. Diamandis frequently writes for online media outlets like Tirto.id and is a member of the Broadly Specific collective, to which she contributes with essays and podcasts. Between late 2019 and the end of 2021, she worked as a project manager for the museum advisory firm Idea* Indonesia, whose clients include the National Museum of Communication and Old Town Jakarta Museum Complex. She also managed the development of the permanent 2021 exhibition of the National Parliament House Museum. Her exhibition proposal was selected for the Korea Arts Management Service (KAMS) funding in 2019.

Elena Tortelli, student of the Arts Curating course at Istituto Marangoni Firenze. Born in 2000 in Italy, Elena Tortelli is an art curator and writer. She began her university studies in 2019 at Istituto Marangoni Firenze, with the three-year course in Arts Curating, which she will complete in July 2022. In the future she plans to gain international experience to expand her knowledge of the art world.

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