



KITCHENS&INVADERS

ORGANIZED BY **GERMANO CELANT**
9 APRIL 2015–21 FEBRUARY 2016

T Triennale
Design
Museum

KITCHENS & INVADERS

Triennale Design Museum
9 April 2015 – 21 February 2016

Eight Edition

Triennale Design Museum

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KITCHENS & INVADERS

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ORGANIZED BY
GERMANO CELANT



EIGHT EDITION OF THE TRIENNALE DESIGN MUSEUM

KITCHENS & INVADERS



1 Don Siegel, frame from the movie *The Body Snatchers*, 1956

Organized by Germano Celant, the eighth edition of the Triennale Design Museum, which coincides with Expo Milano 2015, is entitled “Kitchens&Invaders”. Developed in close collaboration with Silvana Annicchiarico, the director of the Museum, this edition takes its inspiration from the science-fiction novel *The Body Snatchers*, written by Jack Finney in 1955, and from the film based on the book and directed by Don Siegel. Both have come to be seen as bringing about a break and a transformation in the collective imagination. In the story, the aliens turn from “invaders” into “conspirators” who surreptitiously mingle with and insinuate themselves among the inhabitants of the Earth: they enter the everyday lives of human beings, leading to an internal and thus endemic revolution in society, which is invaded by alien forces that blend in with humans, adopting their form in order to gain the upper hand.

Similarly, “Kitchens&Invaders” tells of the gradual but inexorable mutation of kitchen utensils into machines and robots. This is an army of “invaders” which, since the mid-nineteenth century and the advent of industrialisation, has spread out and taken the place of many human activities in the kitchen. The aim is to follow the evolution in Italy of these “conspirators” – kitchens and electrical appliances – from the first documented objects through to 2015, also with an eye on international design and foreign industries. The exhibition design illustrates this universe of body-snatcher invaders – from refrigerators to microwave ovens, coffee makers to toasters, waste disposal units and ductless hoods to kettles and blenders, deep fryers and ice-cream makers – which have expanded from early industrialisation to the mass market, from automation to digital innovation.

This amazing, magical world is brought to life by Italo Rota with the graphic project of Irma Boom, in a celebration of our mechanised landscape. A world that is at once alien and ambiguous, utilitarian and ergonomic, taking from many different sectors and visual forms – from sci-fi to horror, fairy tale and cartoon, through to art – with comical and tragic-comic, ironic and disturbing effects on the interaction between humans and machines: a science-fiction kitchen.

The eighth edition of the Triennale Design Museum opens on 8 April 2015 and remain on display until 21 February 2016.

“Kitchens&Invaders” covers an area of about 2.000 square metres, with a selection of 350 works from the Triennale Design Museum’s permanent collection and from museums, companies, public and private institutions, as well as Italian and international collectors and designers, have also offered their expertise, together with works from their collections, for the creation of this ironically disturbing technological landscape, which is both alien and familiar. Taking up the theme of Expo Milan 2015, *Feeding the Planet: Energy for Life*, it tells the story of a dynamic, ever-changing and as yet unexplored visual and sensorial universe. It is a story about food - and it is yet intentionally created without food, and without the objects normally associated with food and eating.

For the “Kitchens&Invaders” exhibition, a major volume of about 400 pages in two versions (English and Italian) is published by Electa, with analyses and contributions by specialists, writers and collectors, as well as an illustrated dictionary of household appliances, which will retrace their history and uses from the first patent to the most recent developments, with a particular focus on the situation in Italy.



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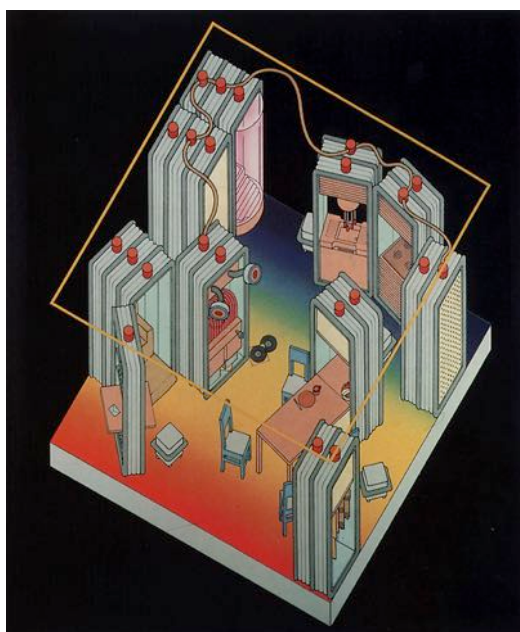
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HISTORICAL NOTES

Ever since ancient times, man has adopted many manual tools for preparing food, using fire and water to process it, and containers in shapes and materials for various natural ways of conserving it – ranging from bread to oil, and wine to vegetables, through to olives and other cultivated fruits. At the same time, techniques such as smoking, drying, pasteurising, canning, and immersion in acidic and alcoholic substances, to name but a few, made it possible to preserve foodstuffs for long periods of travel, famine and conflict.

2 Zoppas Advertising
in "Domus" magazine, 1959

3 Scavolini Advertising
in "Abitare" magazine, 1986

Many of the tools – such as hand whisks and mixers, mills and pestles – that have come down to us from ancient times, and thus from before electrification, were powered by humans or animals. With the technological advances that have come about since the mid-nineteenth century, these tools have been replaced by electrical appliances.

With industrialisation and the widespread introduction of electricity came the first attempts to electrify everyday utensils, such as teapots and kettles, which were fitted with electrical heating elements. Partly as a result of research in chemistry during the same period came one of the great revolutions in the world of science and industry as applied to nutrition and to human life in general: the invention of the ice-making machine, which was patented in 1851 by the American physician John Gorrie. This later evolved into the refrigerator, which gradually took the place of the ice-box.

In the world of the food industry, patents were also taken out on several new foods and beverages, such as Liebig meat extract (1865) and Coca-Cola (1886), on innovative conservation methods, such as canned foods, which came with the studies of the French scientist Nicolas Appert in 1812, even though the technique really took off only in 1855, when the can opener was invented.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century brought many inventions and innovations in the world of food, helping to improve the quality of life of people around the world, as can still be seen in the habits and customs of most populations.

Together with scientific discoveries related to food, the planet underwent a gradual process of automation of the tools used in nutrition. The first step was to conserve food using refrigeration in industrial and commercial settings, but in about 1895 the first

4 SCIC Advertising in
"Domus" magazine, 1967

5 Ettore Sottsass, Preliminary
Project for Microenvironment,
c. 1971 © Ettore Sottsass.
Photo: Jean-Pierre Maurer

Automats, which automatically dispensed food and drinks against payment, were opened in Europe and the United States. Electric motors were reduced in size and in about 1910 came the rise of a second generation of appliances which used electricity to replace manual power, rather than just for heating purposes. The twentieth century brought new technical systems to help preserve, crush, knead and mix, and with the economic boom after the Second World War, which was also assisted by

advertising, radio and television, electrical appliances rapidly entered the homes of all families. Together with the refrigerator, blenders, toasters, microwave ovens, waste disposers, coffee machines, grinders, mixers, range hoods, electric knives, centrifuges, and machines for steaming, for exploding popcorn or for frying began to enter the domestic domain.

At the same time, the technologies used in cookers and ovens began to improve and to evolve, and while homes gradually began to offer less space for guests, and in-house domestic staff became less common, the kitchen increasingly became the nerve-centre of middle-class homes.

It was a place for the family to come together, for the production of food, often with a radio, and always with a fridge and a pantry. Depending on their size, type and the wealth of their contents, they were also symbols of economic, social and cultural status.



6 Joe Colombo,
Minikitchen, Boffi, 1963



8 Trita Express, R.G.V., 2013



9 Ufficio Tecnico Agrinova,
Zakandra, Agrinova, 2015



10 Deepdesign (Raffaella
Mangiarotti, Matteo Bazzicalupo),
SMF01CREU, Smeg, 2014



7 Marco Prizzon, *Fifty*,
Prizzon-Arcorm, 1950's

In the late 1920s, when Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky's *Frankfurt Kitchen* was designed for a popular housing complex, kitchen design began to be integrated and organised around a single space, which was small but capable of responding to the many needs of the modern housewife. During the same period, the city of Vienna decided to offer the inhabitants of its new low-income council houses the convenience of a fitted kitchen. Various types were available in the catalogue of the so-called *Soziale Wohnkultur* in Vienna (the municipal public-housing management company), and they were fully introduced in the 1940s and '50s.

The first example of modern design in Italy – in which a contemporary vision involved arranging spaces complete with mechanical or electrical appliances – was the *Casa Elettrica*, which was shown at the IV Triennale di Monza in 1930.

Funded by the Edison company, the *Casa Elettrica* was designed by Gruppo 7 (the Group of Seven, with Luigi Figini, Guido Frette, Sebastiano Larco, Gino Pollini, Carlo Enrico Rava, Giuseppe Terragni and Ubaldo Castagnoli) together with Piero Bottoni, who was responsible for the kitchen and other service areas, which he designed for “the maximum use of space that the modern building industry demands”.

In addition to the range, there were also electrical appliances such as a refrigerator, coffee grinder, water steriliser, hot-plate, teapot, coffee maker, kettle, egg cooker and toaster.

Electrical appliances were extensively introduced into Italian homes after the war, thanks to Electrolux, Fiat, Girmi, Ignis, and other companies, which also helped create new designs through the work of architects and designers such as Joe Colombo, Vico Magistretti, Angelo Mangiarotti, Luca Meda, and Marco Zanuso, to name but a few.

More recently, social, economic and climate issues and worldwide calls for respect for the environment, the conservation of energy and the fight against climate change have led to a further renewal, which now affects both form and technology, with research in the sector being carried out by both Italian and international architects and designers.

Kitchen and electrical appliances have gradually been expanding their range of action, taking over more and more space in houses, which are now built around the concept of the “habitable kitchen”. This is inhabited not just by people but also by dynamic modern entities in the form of machines: a “population of invaders” that is gradually taking the place of manual work by humans with their mechanical sophistication and specialisation.

THE JOURNEY

The journey opens with the *Satellite Kitchen*, a visionary prefabricated dwelling unit designed by Luigi Colani in the 70's. Chosen as a connection to and continuation of “Arts&Foods”, where there are other examples of complete housing units, it looks like an alien presence that has just landed with army of refrigerators.

The visitor starts the journey by going through a tunnel fitted with flashing beacons and is bombarded by signs and alarms that warn of the dangers that are always lurking in the domestic sphere of the kitchen. Knives, flames, water and electrical appliances are



placed just centimetres apart in the kitchen, making it one of the most dangerous (and deadly) places in the home. A report drafted in 2013 by the NFPA (the American National Fire Protection Association) reveals that an average of seven people are killed every day by fires in the home. NFPA data also shows that, between 2007 and 2011, two out of every five household accidents (42% of the total) took place in the kitchen.

Once past this section, refrigerators tell us about cold and water, symbolised by a huge “King of Refrigerators”, with an icy tongue, watching over his subjects, and a chessboard of different types of fridge (from mini-bars to wine coolers, all the way to blast chillers) and periods, from the legendary Fiat of the 1950s to the *Milione* series by Ignis in 1962, which celebrated the sale of the company’s six millionth fridge about ten years after its first model. Then there are the undulating shapes of Roberto Pezzetta’s *Oz* (1998) and Antonio Villas’s recent *Chalk Chalk* prototype refrigerator-blackboard (2008).

11 Cucina elettrica tipo CN3 a tre piastre con forno, 1949, Tecnomasio Italiano Brown Boveri – Milano

12 Modello 9023, Bompanii, 1961

From cold and water we turn to heat and fire. Here cookers are artfully composed to form an abstract module. Once again, we see models of different types and from different periods: from the

kitchen range by Tecnomasio Italiano Brown Boveri of 1949 to a Piano Design cooking top for Smeg, through to the innovative modular induction system by Foster.

Earth is represented by a section that examines one of the most pressing issues of the contemporary world: the disposal and recycling of organic waste. This accounts for about 30% of domestic waste and, when composted, can become fertiliser for plants, while reducing the amount of waste produced. Companies and designers are increasingly looking for innovative and sustainable solutions to this problem. Perfect examples of these can be seen in the composting bin by Gruppo Sartori Ambiente and the designs by Gabriele Fiocco, who has come up with a strategy for separate waste collection by manually making composting bins for the home using recycled materials.

A later section is devoted to air. Enveloped in fumes and vapours, visitors are introduced to the process of fume extraction. A tangle of tubes looms over their heads, channelling the air towards a whirring, menacing-looking fan. The items selected range from the minimalist, abstract forms of Faber hoods to the *Pescecapa*, a prototype designed in 2009 by Gaetano Pesce for Elica - a figurative reinterpretation of the hood with the playful, sensual shapes of vegetables, fruit and legumes.

Continuing through the exhibition, our sense of hearing is attracted by a veritable orchestra of household appliances playing a truly unusual mechanical symphony, plunging us into a world of squeals and buzzings, puffs and squeaks. They come from a phalanx of those

13 Fabrizio Crisà, Ye, Elica, 2014

14 Gaetano Pesce, *Pescecapa*, Elica, 2009

small appliances that invade our kitchens every day with their sounds and noises: toasters, ice machines, blenders, knife sharpeners, coffee grinders, hand vacs, kettles, centrifuges, ice-cream makers, graters, mixers, food processors, juicers and food choppers. These range from those made by Girmi (a Piedmontese company that in 1954 unveiled its *Frullo*, the first blender

to be made in Italy, and in 1957 the *Girmi*, the name of which is a contraction of *gira* and *miscela* - “turn” and “mix”) to the historic items by Quick Mill in the seventies. Then there are Alessandro Mendini’s experimental series for Philips and Alessi in 1994, and Gae Aulenti’s toaster for Trabo of 1997, which bears the word “TOAST” in relief, thus unequivocally revealing the correspondence between form and function.

Then comes the section devoted to touch, with an array of appliances (meat grinders, mixers, electric carving knives, dies, tomato presses, ice-cream makers and slicers) which have blades as their common feature, with their actions of slicing, mincing and cutting conveying the idea of potential threats and dangers. In one installation, some of these isolated components will be in action, while others will be shown as complete, reassembled appliances.



15 Electrotechnics Pavillion, Fiera Campionaria di Milano (Milan Trade Fair). Sigma Kitchens and appliances, by Tecnomasio Brown Boveri, 1936, courtesy Archivio Storico Fondazione Fiera Milano



16 Archivio Storico Breda, Refrigerators Assembly Department, Breda Meccanica Bresciana in Brescia, mid 1950's, courtesy Fondazione Isec, Sesto San Giovanni



17 Triplex factory at the Pavilion of supplies and equipments for houses, hotels and stores, Fiera Campionaria di Milano (Milan Trade Fair), 1956, courtesy Archivio Storico Fondazione Fiera Milano

The exhibition then turns to another sense, which is that of smell. The smell of coffee is conveyed by a selection of over 100 electric coffee makers in a great bookcase that tells their history and development from the early twentieth century to the present day. Those on show include the *Europiccola* by Pavoni of 1961 (the first espresso coffee machine with characteristics similar to those used in cafés but small enough for use at home), the *Baby Gaggia* by Makio Hasuike for Gaggia of 1977 and Richard Sapper's *Coban* for Alessi in 1997.

The Museum also has theme-based exhibits for children. Symbolising the sense of sight, four periscopes along the way allow them to watch sequences of cartoons on the theme of kitchens and household appliances.

In this interweaving of senses and elements, some iconic examples of kitchen items have acquired particular prominence as seminal examples of design: Ettore Sottsass's *Environment*, unveiled at the "Italy: The New Domestic Landscape" exhibition curated by Emilio Ambasz at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1972, and the functional freestanding *Minikitchen unit* on castors by Joe Colombo for Boffi, presented at the XIII Triennale di Milano in 1964. The exhibition ends with a reflection on contemporary kitchens, in *La Cucina. Luogo di Passione*, a specially commissioned work by Gaetano Pesce, which for the entire duration of the Museum will be brought to life by sounds, fragrances, smells and actions. It views the kitchen as a "central place of activity and experimentation, of passion in creating and inventing recipes, a place for coming together, welcoming others, seducing, loving and being loved, a place for showing off, intimidating, provoking and overawing," as Pesce himself puts it.

"Kitchens&Invaders" thus creates an immersive narrative by means of a display that is emotional, absorbing, and with great atmosphere.

THE PUBLICATION

For "Kitchens&Invaders", Electa publishes a major volume of about 400 pages, edited by Germano Celant with Silvana Annicchiarico and the graphic project of Irma Boom. With essays by experts in a whole range of sectors and about 500 illustrations, the book retraces the themes touched on in this edition of the Museum from a chronological, but also thematic perspective.

The book examines the countless thought-provoking works on show, with a wealth of essays, fact sheets and a dictionary of household appliances with over 50 entries. These are interspersed with illustrations that open up like windows, introducing the reader to the great themes of the Museum. The book is thus inspired by the same concept as the Museum: its aim is to involve readers in a constant stream of ideas and images, inviting them to enter into the universe of interactions between cooking and appliances. The authors are scholars, specialists, writers and collectors whose essays introduce the general public to their particular areas of interest in a scientific but also clear and informative manner.



TDM1



TDM5



TDM2



TDM6



TDM3



TDM7



TDM4

TRIENNALE DESIGN MUSEUM

The Triennale Design Museum opened in December 2007 as a sort of “mutant” museum that every year changes both its content and its selection criteria and display formats, as well as the way it is visited. There is only one question at the heart of each edition of the Triennale Design Museum: What is Italian design?, but each year the answer is given from a different perspective, with each new edition entering into a complementary relationship with the answers, displays and stories of the previous ones.

TDM1 2007–2009

The Seven Obsessions of Italian Design

The first edition, curated by Andrea Branzi with a design by Italo Rota and Peter Greenaway, examined the recurrent obsessions of Italian design, going back to their roots and origins in periods that came before twentieth-century modernity.

TDM2 2009–2010

Series Off Series

Curated by Andrea Branzi with a display installation by Antonio Citterio, the second edition investigated the mutually fruitful relationship between mass-produced and one-off or custom-made products.

TDM3 2010–2011

The Things We Are

The third edition, curated by Alessandro Mendini with display design by Pierre Charpin, expanded the classic confines of traditional design, introducing a radical reappraisal of the very notion of design.

TDM4 2011–2012

Dream Factories

The fourth edition, curated by Alberto Alessi with stage design by Martí Guixé, retraced the history of Italian design, focusing especially on the role of entrepreneurs – those “Captains Courageous” who have made it physically possible for Italian design to make its mark on the world.

TDM5 2012–2013

TDM5: Grafica italiana

The fifth, “Italian graphics”, edition curated by Mario Piazza, Giorgio Camuffo and Carlo Vinti with display design by Fabio Novembre, presented the great heritage of Italian graphics in all its stunning variety, with works from the twentieth century to the present day.

TDM6 2013–2014

Design. The Syndrome of Influence

The sixth edition, curated by Pierluigi Nicolini, with display design by Pierluigi Cerri, was a choral, polyphonic event that investigated the ins and outs of the history of Italian design, from the postwar years to the present day, focusing on one of its key skills: its ability to assimilate and its curiosity and desire to interact with other art forms and other cultures in order to create new directions and projects.

TDM7 2014–2015

Italian Design Beyond the Crisis.

Autarky, Austerity, Autonomy

Curated by Beppe Finessi, with display design by Philippe Nigro and graphics by Italo Lupi, this edition investigated the singular ability of Italian design to react to the momentous crises of the twentieth century by coming up with creative and production strategies – from autarky in the thirties to austerity in the seventies, through to autonomous production today – revealing its amazing ability to innovate by turning constraints into opportunities.

KITCHENS&INVADERS
EIGHT EDITION OF THE
TRIENNALE DESIGN MUSEUM

OPENING HOURS
9 APRIL 2015–21 FEBRUARY 2016
EVERYDAY
10AM–11PM

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