

Leather, Visionary Threads of Colors and Trends for the Future

BENEDETTA GRASSO (February 17, 2010)



"Arts&Tannery" is presentation organized by the Italian Trade Commission and Sistema Consorzio Pelle Italiana. Italian fabrics and leather that takes us into the new trends of Spring and Summer 2011.

Fabrics, leather, colored threads and patterns intertwine in most of our clothes; they are the basic element that determine how we look and dress but we often don't notice them.

It takes the craftsmen, the experts and the entrepreneurs in the textile industry and the trendsetters to look at fashion in a more creative way, searching for aesthetic canons and treating clothes as forms of visual expression.



On February 17, on a bright winter morning at the [Midtown Loft](#) [2], sophisticated buyers, curious fashionistas, classy young women and men took a tour around "Arts&Tannery", a captivating showcase of Italian leather by some of the most exclusive brands of the country ([Ausonia Conceria](#), [Bcn Conceria](#) [3], [MB3 Conceria](#) [4], [Pellegrini International](#) [5], [Primorpelli](#) [6], [Prodotti Alfa](#) [7], [Sanlorenzo](#), [Tuscania Industria Conciaria](#) [8], [Valvibrata Ornaments](#) [9]).

In an explosion of colors between rainbow-like pieces of clothing, jewelry, small and big accessories and floating umbrellas, the exhibitors displayed their material over hangers or shelves in stands facing white sofas. There they could chat with interested people, share thoughts, and touch and cut pieces of material while exchanging contacts and opinions.

The 2010 edition of Arts&Tannery, organized by the [Italian Trade Commission](#) [10] and the Italian Leather System (Sistema Consorzio Pelle Italiana), aims to acknowledge American consumers on the latest trends in the Italian leather sector and to introduce the US market to the greatest brands and designers operating in the field.

If to an inexperienced eye it might seem just a fascinating display, a giant extravagant and eccentric wardrobe in the heart of Midtown, Arts&Tannery has become a true tradition aiming to establish a relationship between important producers and the Italian Trade Commission. It can also inspire possible investors and designers for the upcoming Spring/Summer 2011 season...

As a stern-looking man feels with his hand the texture of the fabric, a few feet further an enthusiastic young woman eats a delicious piece of cheese, served at the elegant buffet, while a group of people stare at a video.

The main multimedia presentation of the event, the video has been produced and ideated by Lorenzo Cotrozzi of the Italian Leather System. It's a collection of conceptual images and ideas created to inspire artists working in the textile field.

Mr. Cotrozzi explained that the results of his study "show the selection of those surfaces that in our opinion are better than others." They are chosen to "stimulate creativity" and lead to "new horizons of fashion."

If we consider for a second the general taste in other fields, we can see that this past year has seen a proliferation of works that focus on the most visionary, surreal and escapist aspects of life both in the movie industry and in the one of visual arts. After movies like "Up" ([Pixar](#) [11]), "[Avatar](#) [12]", "[Coraline](#) [13]" or [Tim Burton](#) [14]'s upcoming "[Alice in Wonderland](#) [15]", viewers expect to be taken into a 3D world, filled with special effects and a much more vivid experience, safe but psychedelic, cheerful but at the same time gothic, more digital and virtual, yet more physical. The experience is something that digs deeper in our dream-like sense of reality and in a fantastical dimension, that is traditional and mythical but also very modern.

Also, one of the most important topics of this day and age is "going green", understanding the power of 'organic' and make the most of it.

How do these things relate to the Arts&Tannery Presentation in New York? It's simple. As Mr. Cotrozzi pointed out, the trends in fashion are linked to these concepts.

He focused on the four major trends of 2011: Dry Appeal, Flag Energy, Hybrid Sense, Blade Touch.

Hybrid Sense, for example, is inspired by this visionary tendency. There are hundreds of ways for a stylist to combine "the natural and the synthetic, the primordial and the futuristic, the animate and the inanimate. In this Pandora-like world made of enchanted forests, imaginary creatures, visions of nature." Things are in a continuous metamorphosis. This can translate to eccentric plumage, drawings on the leather that follow the oneiric logic, not the rational one, textures and colors that



remind us of mythical animals like dragons, or as suggested by Mr. Cotrozzi, “watery visions, smudged patterns, hybrid proliferations.”

Dry Appeal instead enhances those surfaces that are dry, dessicated, dehydrated, as if they were handcrafted and irregular, organic in a way.

Blade Touch has something very Tim Burtonesque in it. It's gothic, but not depressing, nor is it decadent. It's exciting and a representation of the youngest generation's tastes that romanticizes the darkest elements and makes them sensuous and warm.

Finally, Flag Energy, as Mr. Cotrozzi explains, is linked to a need of return to order and discipline; to the lack of evident male role models that has led fashion into looking to old uniforms and military clothes as a new starting point: the search for something virile that also makes strong statements. Using primary colors, like most flags do, this trend inspires clothes that are geometric and bold.

As we are moving more and more towards a world focused on virtual life, thanks to what Mr. Cotrozzi calls the “avatar syndrom”, the new generation will look at clothes as something contaminated and hybridized, which can bring together the basics of nature and the most conceptual and technological input.

The event will continue for another day (Feb 18) and will give the exhibitors a farther chance to promote their materials.

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