

# ALTROVE

## Stories of places and design

MILAN DESIGN  
WEEK 2023

**Tortona Rocks is proud to launch its ALTROVE project: an urban incursion that ventures beyond the territorial boundaries of the Fuorisalone, all in an effort to seek out new cultural short circuits between design and the city.**

**The project kicks off in the Giambellino neighbourhood, with MilanoSecrets having mapped out a handpicked selection of everyday places that will play host to examples of stellar design by young talents.**

**ALTROVE** is an initiative created by Tortona Rocks - one of the key players in Milan's Fuorisalone - to experiment with new approaches to design by establishing cultural short circuits between design and the city.

Transcending the district limits of the Fuorisalone, which tends to keep exhibition initiatives contained within defined areas, **Tortona Rocks ventures outside its historical home of Opificio 31 to kick off a satellite project intended to forge new and unexpected urban geographies.**

In straying from its native area, the project aims to nurture an original dialogue between design and Milan, break out of the usual exhibition routes, and **make everyday places the stage** for new hybrid experiences, visual and conceptual interminglings.

For the 2023 edition, the urban incursion will set its sights on the **Giambellino neighbourhood**. Given that Milan is the undisputed capital of design, going off the beaten track involves pouring even more energy into emphasising this link by helping it spread to new sites, new neighbourhoods, thus making it more inclusive and surprising.

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Not 'venues' in the traditional sense, but settings which maintain their own identity and activity, seamlessly coexisting with the presence of **a selection of out-of-context design objects**, urban epiphanies whose collocation amplifies the sense of discovery and belonging.

In collaboration with **MilanoSecrets**, the platform that shows Milan through the lens of its most unusual and exclusive addresses, this year **ALTROVE** will explore the Giambellino neighbourhood, an urban stage which is still animated by its own local spirit, yet with an unquenchable thirst for transformation.

Carefully curated by **MilanoSecrets**, this unconventional tour will shine a rare spotlight **on nine everyday places** - from a pharmacy to an anthropological food laboratory - showing them to be new addresses to explore, with exciting addition of design objects located there temporarily during design week, striking up a site-specific dialogic relationship with their surroundings.

The design selection process, curated by **Diletta Toniolo** for **Tortona Rocks**, involved both Italian and international designers, up-and-coming young talents along with more well-established firms who will offer reflections on modern life through design interventions that merge intriguingly with their assigned locations.

For the first edition, the project has garnered the sponsorship of an exceptional partner: **Boggi Milano**, the menswear brand which interprets what it means to be Milanese through a contemporary lens. Much in the same vein as the initiative itself - which jumps the well-worn track of the design world - Boggi Milano also prioritises a desire to evolve, to keep up with the challenges posed by contemporary life, thinking outside the box and blazing its own trail. For years, the brand's response to the challenges of the modern world has been to shift and adapt, making increasingly ethical and sustainable choices with a view to a more circular approach which helps maintain balance with the planet. That is why the Boggi Milano collection is proud to welcome a new range: technical clothing with high standards of comfort and quality, all with the lowest possible environmental impact thanks to the use of natural fibres, recycled fabrics, and certified, cutting-edge materials.

For Boggi Milano, the natural next step in this path of continuous research and evolution was to support the **ALTROVE** project as a way of celebrating the city of Milan - the brand's birthplace - by participating in and sponsoring a freeform and incredibly open exhibition, which is capable of showcasing the city's enormous artistic and cultural potential as it blossoms and develops.

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## THE LOCATIONS OF 'ALTROVE' and THE PROJECTS ON DISPLAY

*Descriptions by MilanoSecrets*

### 1 - Gogol & Company

Via Savona, 101

*Gogol & Company is a place for culture and independent sharing, a special place where visitors can pause to reflect as well as communicate with others: a truly multifaceted location that combines a café, exhibition space and bookshop, which is at the heart of this project.*

#### Project and designer

**Cartabianca:** Mattia Bidoli, Andrea Brolatti, Maria Vittoria Ghioldi, Bianca Rapetti Mogol

Produced by four young students from the **Politecnico di Milano**, **Cartabianca** is an installation, a journey, an idea. The site-specific project aims to explore the cognitive processes that are triggered when we find ourselves formulating a prejudice - such as judging a book by its cover, for example.

The journey develops as a running thread of conceptual experiences designed to provoke a reaction in those who are willing to listen, not simply stopping at the material surface, but instead going beyond it. In short, freeing ourselves from our prejudices to give reason carte blanche.

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### 2 - Trillino Selvaggio Centro d'Arte

Via Tolstói, 14/A

*There's plenty of art to be found at **Trillino Selvaggio**, a concept with children and young people at its heart, encouraging them to participate in creative and expressive journeys geared towards helping them grow. The space alone is deserving of a visit in itself: a former galalith factory, renovated and turned into a centre where everyone is free to discover their artistic vocations and have their creativity stimulated.*

#### Project and designer

**Uroboro:** Filippo Zambelli

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**Uroboro** is a project designed by **Filippo Zambelli** specifically for Trillino Selvaggio. The object is intended to represent the sum of all the creative practices undertaken at Trillino: consisting of multiple elements connected together to form an articulated snake - the titular ouroboros - it offers the user freedom of choice in how to modulate it. Its simple geometric components are far from pretentious - basic, in fact, almost obvious - so that the visitor's focus falls less on the form and more on how it can be used.

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### **3 - Farmacia Tolstoi**

Via Tolstoi, 17

*Can a pharmacy become a place for people to meet? The answer is yes, if the spirit behind it is made up of capable, empathetic people who have decided to expand the family business by dedicating themselves to the wellbeing of others by offering herbal and natural medicine. Indeed, **Farmacia Tolstoj** offers a wealth of tinctures, essential oils and herbal teas in a comfortable, welcoming setting. The owner, whose personal passions are antiques (with a variety of period pieces dotted around the pharmacy) and hospitality, has lent a truly unique, familiar touch to a place that is worth experiencing.*

#### **Project and designer**

**Ogni goccia conta:** Evelina Sanna in collaboration with Amici del Policlinico Donatori di Sangue

**Ogni goccia conta - Every Drop Counts** - is an interactive installation born out of a collaboration between designer Evelina Sanna and the Amici del Policlinico Donatori di Sangue, an association that has been active since 1974 at the Policlinico di Milano. Taking centre stage is the symbol of donation par excellence: the blood bag, which is sadly associated more with illness than with healing, is only ever handled by doctors and nurses, contributing to its persistent aura of taboo. Within this installation, however, the blood bag becomes a celebration of the gift and aid offered by every donation, now within everyone's reach, as well as the start of a fresh dialogue geared particularly towards involving young people.

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## 4 - El Vinatt

Via Tolstoi, 49

*Pasetti and René are the two stars of the friendliest, most convivial spot in town: **El Vinatt** is the perfect example of the Milan of days gone by, a place that no longer exists which we think back on with a fond nostalgia. The neighbourhood chose this place as its key landmark and when the couple's daughters came along, the wine bar was transformed, yet remained itself. A perfect place to sample some wine and enjoy a relaxed chat, where you can feel welcome and drink in the atmosphere.*

### Project and designer

**Blossom:** Alice Barki

**Ygrò:** Emiliano Colombo

For **ALTROVE**, El Vinatt is hosting two objects that fit in perfectly. Created by designer **Alice Barki**, **Blossom** is a kinetic bottle holder whose constituent 'petals' move in such a way as to envelop the bottle, opening up like a flower when the bottle is lifted off and closing up around it when it is set back down. A highly artistic, 3D-printed bottle holder which lends an animated energy to the table thanks to applied technology. Complementing the first piece is **Ygrò**, a designer corkscrew and functional object distinguished by its unexpected and elegant shapes, designed by **Emiliano Colombo**. Designed with high-quality materials, this objet d'art strikes a perfect balance between functionality and aesthetic appeal.

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## 5 - Tu mi fai girar - Polleria di quartiere

Via Vespri Siciliani, 30

***Tu Mi Fai Girar** is a popular local delicatessen and rotisserie: whilst this might conjure up the image of a decades-old fixture of the neighbourhood, despite its historical character, this shop actually only opened its doors during the lockdown, a testament to how it is possible to change tack and forge a new business in even the darkest of times, all whilst remaining firmly rooted in the local area. Lisa, the owner, decided after years of hard work in the world of travel that she actually felt much more at home amidst dishes of steaming pasta and unctuous sauce - and delighted in offering others the same warm comfort.*

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### Project and designer

**Alles wird Hut:** Schmitthut (di Susanne Schmitt)

With the title **Alles wird Hut** (All Will Be Well) - a German pun using the phonetic similarity between Hut ('hat') and Gut ('good') - **Susanne Schmitt** (Schmitthut) shows how old-fashioned tills, the iconic little yellow books produced by German publishing house Reclam, theatre posters and IKEA bags can become unexpected objects. For twenty-three years, Susanne Schmitt has dedicated herself entirely to hats. As a widely-renowned and much-admired milliner (mentioned in several guides and recipient of awards as one of the finest production workshops in Germany), Susanne has an unbridled desire to play with her hats: and the surprise lies not only in the materials, but also in the interplay between two- and three-dimensionality found in the results.

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## 6 - LAC Laboratorio di antropologia del cibo

Via Privata Metauro, 4

*LAC is the laboratory dedicated to the anthropology of food established by a determined young lady with the desire to bring together cooks from an incredibly varied range of backgrounds: second- and third-generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, but also musicians, artists, carers, restaurateurs and cooks, all telling the story of their origins through the cuisine of their homeland. The initiative demonstrates how food is an opportunity for integration and storytelling, but also a means of changing how 'the other' is perceived.*

### Project and designer

**Avanzi:** Cono Design Studio

**Tulumba:** Studio Biskt

In the kitchen, leftovers are often the driver for new creative processes, where whatever remains, the waste, becomes a raw material in itself that is open to new interpretations. The intention of the project is to breathe new life into the 'leftovers' of woodworking, specifically those generated for the **Now&Then** collection created by **Cono Design Studio** in collaboration with **Dale Italia**. Of course, the project's links to the food scene are clear, as it dialogues with the context of the exhibition itself (LAC) and fully embraces the approach of 'reusing leftovers' that is typical of the culinary world.

**Studio Biskt** was founded in 2008 and presents itself as a dual universe, where ideas are created by hybridising industrial processes and manual skills. Specialising in the production of ceramics, Studio Biskt presents **TULUMBA**, a collection of vases with the familiar fluted shape of churros - the classic Spanish doughnuts - which makes for a delightful aesthetic. Designed to be mixed and matched, the multiple possible

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combinations lend the object a sculptural and unusual silhouette. The slender lines can freely intertwine with one another to create a set of infinite variables within which - along with a hint of humour - lies the charm of this vase.

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## 7 - Pastamordolce

via Privata Metauro, 11

*Whether you prefer sweet or savoury, if you love any kind of handmade pastry, **Pastamordolce** is the place for you. Pastries and fresh pasta have been at the heart of this business since it opened its doors in 1991. We sampled both and still couldn't decide on which one they do best...*

### Project and designer

**Mani in pasta:** Asli Özden, Mohamed Zaky

Hailing from Turkey and Egypt, designers **Asli Özden** and **Mohamed Gamal Zaky** celebrate their shared love of pasta and its importance in their lives. Though they came from different coasts of the Mediterranean, their childhoods shared a focus on pasta, which was cemented as an even more central part of their diets during their studies in Italy.

**Mani in Pasta** is an installation that is divided into two sections. The first consists of a series of images depicting the age-old connection between pasta and hands. Any direct reference to the food itself is deliberately excluded, with the creators instead preferring to highlight the artisanal pasta-making process. Here, all the pasta is shaped by hands that produce it, eat it, and at the same time, push the limits of creativity.

The second part of the project pays tribute to two of Italy's most widely-renowned manufacturing industries: pasta and furniture. Where the two meet, iconic design models handcrafted using different pasta shapes establish a playful new relationship between everyday objects and design.

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## 8 - Campagnolo Milanese

Via Tagiura, 5

*Have you ever wanted to be a child again and play 'market stalls'? Well, if so, this is just the right shop for you: a truly delightful place to indulge your inner child as you do your shopping. The brightly-coloured striped stalls are set up in a beautiful courtyard, with cheerful*

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*background music and a unique atmosphere. A whole world of fruits, vegetables, flowers, dairy products and typical foods of all kinds at your fingertips: simply serve yourself, weigh it all and then pay at the checkout. Easy, right?*

### **Project and designer**

**Giambellino By The Sea, Ricordi di un'estate futura (Memories of a Future Summer): Fulcro Design**

Visiting the market is always a heady sensory experience, amidst aromas of fruit, colourful canopies

and warm sunshine, almost as if it were a gateway to far-flung worlds and distant shores. Through a collection of bags made from recycled sails, the **Fulcro Design** collective transports us into the dream of a summer getaway that becomes a reflection on the beauty and fragility of the marine ecosystem. Working in partnership with **Bolina Sail**, artisans based in Lignano Sabbiadoro, they have put together a collection that offers sails that have travelled over sea and ocean a new lease of life, in order to emphasise the versatility of materials and the narratives that every object bears within it. "Every bag is a sail, every sail has a story."

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## **9 - Tagiura**

Via Tagiura, 5

*Nobody is quite sure whether this restaurant was named after the street, or vice versa: suffice to say that when you say Tagiura, in Milan, it immediately conjures up the image of a timeless spot that is perfect for breakfast, a quick sandwich on the go, or even a leisurely dinner with friends. That unique brand of old-fashioned charm that wins over diners of all kinds who are in search of a city with a human touch.*

### **Project and artist**

**Il Giambellino:** photo exhibition by Bernard Iachella

Our extended exhibition and intimate insight into the neighbourhood concludes at **Tagiura** with a photo exhibition by French artist **Bernard Iachella**, who conveys his perceptions of the neighbourhood through his shots and these words, which capture its spirit:

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*“Giambellino isn’t somewhere you discover at first glance.*

*As you walk along the building façades, past the shop windows, you gradually encounter a diverse, lively, hardworking population who look at you suspiciously. Who are you? Where have you come from?*

*But that’s not the case.*

*Giambellino welcomes you in its own way. Discreetly, but with a certain authenticity.*

*With no applause, no pomp or circumstance, no insincerity.*

*With a beauty that is neither sterilised nor standardised. Nothing excessive.*

*The impression it gives is one of a cohesive neighbourhood championing mutual assistance, filled with associations, places for everyday life and spaces dedicated to meeting others, which create culture - a specific, local culture.*

*Day in, day out, the shops and markets make quality their top priority.*

*A vital energy which I always felt coursing through the place: after an opening ‘buongiorno’ tainted by my terrible French accent, that first smile spread across their faces every time.*

*After so long waiting to finally be acknowledged, I felt truly welcomed.*

*I have tried my best to use the set of photos presented as part of the ‘ALTROVE’ project to translate this feeling of generosity, this selfless offering from the locals, these colours, against the grey backdrop of concrete and, at times, the sky, of a Milan that holds space for other voices, other rooms, other places in its underbelly. I have followed in their footsteps, shared a sandwich, delighted in tasting - at their insistence - the finest of their products, observed their houses, their streets, their squares, their architecture, their hidden colours. Every night, I came home with a twinkle of that strange light in my eyes!!! And in my camera.”*

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