

New for Autumn-Winter 2011

Alessi: important new products for 2011.

At the Spring-Summer launch in early 2011, following a year in which the Crusinallo company had introduced over 100 new projects to the market, Alberto Alessi asked whether “*Less is more or More is not less?*”, citing the well-known assertions of Mies van der Rohe in the 1920’s and Robert Venturi in the 1960’s.

In the View On catalogue for the new Autumn-Winter 2011 collection, Alberto Alessi poses a new teaser: *Less but better?* In this case, he is referring not to design content but rather to quantity. Alberto Alessi asks if it is not perhaps excessive to keep offering the public a vast number of products, therefore running the risk that we might lose sight of the value of each individual piece.

He explains: “Each year we receive thousands of proposals that are carefully reviewed and screened, reducing the number to a couple hundred. With each of these projects, the design development process begins in earnest, usually lasting between one and two years, depending on the project, in order that it be ready for public presentation. Normally, of these two hundred projects, about a third is destined to fall by the wayside during development (due to engineering difficulties, excessive production costs or because in the final analysis, they failed to achieve the highest level of their aesthetic promise). The rest is gradually introduced in the subsequent collections according to their degree of readiness. What I am therefore going to do now is attempt to tighten the web in the selection process even further, trying to focus only on those projects with the most promise. I admit that it will break my heart a bit to have to say no to an even greater number of designers. But I recognise that, for the greater good of the organisation, the time has come to make this decision. Of course, it is also in the hopes that this tighter selection process will bring out an even higher quality of projects, of greater interest to the public”

This being the case, the Autumn/Winter collection 2011 includes significantly fewer new projects than normal. This does not make them any less interesting, since new names - both familiar and emerging, have contributed to the Crusinallo company’s range of household goods.

The **AdiAlessi** catalogue welcomes **Eero Aarnio**. Born in 1932, Aarnio is one of the great innovators of contemporary Scandinavian design. His projects are both fun and functional. There is the “Diva” watering can and the “Mouse” bottle opener, as well as other “classics” such as the “Aroma” mortar and the “Citrus” citrus squeezer. Further products will be added to the range, creating a new family of products designed by the famous Finnish designer.

On the subject of the new AdiAlessi products, there will be new introductions to the “A Tempo” family and new characters including the porcelain Christmas figures.

The “A Tempo” family was the brainchild of young French designer **Pauline Deltour**, who was eager to revisit the use of steel thread, as a graphical element to create eye-catching

optical effects. This approach also sits perfectly with the new, larger objects, the Umbrella Stand, the Laundry Basket with tray and the Stool.

Looking ahead to Christmas, there is a series of new porcelain figures for the nativity scene designed once more by **LPWK-Massimo Giacon**: “Trotto & Ernesto”, the farrier and his horse; “Pina Farina & Fiona Fish”, the baker and the fishmonger; and a new piece of landscape, the “Little Paradise” oasis. Finally, there is “Snowdaddy”, the tealight holder.

One new entry in the **Alessi** catalogue is young Austrian designer Karin Santorso (**Studio Lucy D.**), who presents a simple yet useful invention: the “Tèò” teaspoon which, once the tea has finished brewing, enables you to remove the teabag and give it a squeeze without causing it to drip everywhere.

French designer **Pierre Charpin**, who designed the 3-section holder for sugar sachets for the 2007 catalogue has contributed to the range with “Il Canif”, a fancy little penknife, and a series of Containers which, superbly reinterpreting an age-old design, represent a contemporary version of 18-19th century gallery trays.

At last year’s major “Oggetti e Progetti” exhibition in Munich, Alessi anticipated the trends of future collections through the so-called “New Topical Issues”. This comprised of twelve projects that were gradually produced: seven at the start of last summer, one in autumn 2010, two at the beginning of 2011, and the final two for the Autumn-Winter 2011 collection.

The latter two projects were designed by **Alessandro Mendini**, who offers a reinterpretation of a number of the Crusinallo company’s products: the cutlery with baroque detailing and the folding cake stand. The latter revisits the famous Mendini woman’s face icon, hence the name “Anna Gong”, and pays tribute to Alessi’s legendary best-selling “art. 898” folding cake stand of the 1960’s.

The cutlery project is a transformation of the “Asta” service. The “Asta Barocca” Cutlery is in fact a refined interpretation of a classic model: with their spirals and doodles they reinterpret and poke fun at one of the archetypal themes of the typology.

The “Alessandro M.- Merry Boy” corkscrew, also by Mendini, was chosen as the 2011 testimonial product for “The Dream Factory” project: the partnership between Alessi and the **Amici dei Bambini Association**, launched in 2006 with the aim of realising the dreams of underprivileged children all over the world, just like Father Christmas.

This year the “Alessandro M.” Father Christmas is dressed in white, red and green to celebrate our country and to bring his help to Italy for the first time. Alessi and Amici dei Bambini have chosen to support a project this year that benefits toddlers, who do not yet have any true desires other than that singular and imperative need to stay close to their mothers. In 2011 the first Comunità Mamma Bambino (Mother and Child Community), managed by Amici dei Bambini, will be created in the Milan area: a safe and protected place where new mothers in difficulty will be welcomed together with their children.

For the Alessi catalogue, Spanish architect **Patricia Urquiola** has designed three items whose primary elements are great swirls of steel wire. The new “Spirogira” family comprises a Fruit Bowl, a Basket and a Centrepiece, which are modular and can be stacked together.

Finally, in three familiar additions will be included in the Alessi catalogue. Using the distinctive decoration of the “La Stanza dello Scirocco” family, Sicilian **Mario Trimarchi** has created two stainless steel items of jewellery, the “Fiato sul collo” collier and the “Alisei” earrings.

Back in January, the “Dressed” complete table set presented by **Marcel Wanders** proved particularly successful. Now, with the coloured version of the round tray and the three new trays in mirror polished stainless steel (one square and two rectangular), Marcel has his brilliant interpretation of the “Dutch Baroque” design movement once again.

After the success of the “hot.it” electric kettle designed by **Wiel Arets** in 2009 and in response to great demand, he now introduces the smaller version of the item and a new white shade for both sizes.

The **Officina Alessi** catalogue also welcomes a pair of new designers, one a new kid on the block and the other a legend of the design world. The latter is **Sir Terence Conran**, the famous and designer and entrepreneur, who turns 80 in October. To pay tribute to him, Alessi has chosen to add a very elegant double-wall “Nice” bowl to its most refined collection.

The younger designer is **Andrea Morgante**, faithful assistant to Jan Kaplicky during his work on various projects for Alessi, from the “Tea & Coffee Towers” set (2003) and the complete “Bettina” table set (2008) to the plastic “Zlin” cutlery (2010). Following the death of his mentor, Morgante has set out on his own and “Megaptera”, a container that is half-tray, half-centrepiece, one of his first works as an independent designer. The particular deformation of the steel plate that characterises it gives the item greater strength without increasing its thickness, and is reminiscent of a series of whale bellies.

Two new colour variations of the “Crevasse” vase by **Zaha Hadid** are included in the Officina Alessi collection: Blue Metal and Black Metal in a limited edition series of 999 numbered pieces.

Last but not least the “**Design Interviews**” series of short books with video interviews, published for the first time in 2008 in collaboration with Edizioni Corraini, dedicates two new titles to **Stefano Giovannoni** and is split into two DVDs, the “**Tea & Coffee Towers**” project, which in 2003 involved 22 international architects.

These video interviews were also produced by the **Alessi Museum**, with direction by **Anna Pitscheider**, and join the previous editions dedicated to Achille Castiglioni, Andrea Branzi, Alessandro Mendini, Richard Sapper and Ettore Sottsass.

The perfect way to crown the celebrations for the 90th anniversary of the Dream Factory.