Design Classics
“If you are not curious, forget it.”

Achille Castiglioni

Maestri or “masters” are those charismatic figures capable of teaching and handing down an art through their direct actions and also through the inheritance of their actual works. In design the maestri communicate through the classics, timeless designs far from any idea of fashions and trends yet so powerful as to produce a style naturally. Tacchini has set aside some rooms in its living environment for the classics and the masters who have designed them, in a process of revivals which are a challenge and a lesson on contemporary style.

Tacchini Re–Editions

Design Classics

(Eng) I maestri sono quelle figure carismatiche, capaci di insegnare e trasmettere un’arte: attraverso il proprio agire diretto, ma anche nel lascito delle loro opere stesse. Nel design, i maestri parlano attraverso i classici: progetti senza tempo e fuori da qualsiasi logica di mode e tendenze, ma talmente potenti da determinare naturalmente uno stile. Tacchini ha riservato alcune stanze del suo abitare ai classici e ai maestri che li hanno disegnati, in un percorso di riedizioni che sfida e insegna alla contemporaneità.
Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni, the hero of Italian design, along with his brothers Pier Giacomo and Livio, was able to find irony and beauty into the simplicity of everyday life. From the simplest electrical switches to the most iconic project of modern design, Castiglioni brothers transformed their uncontrollable curiosity in a series of timeless pieces. Tacchini proposes the revival of two famous pieces of Achille Castiglioni, realized inside a larger project dedicated to the reproduction of classics of modern design. Babela, designed in 1958 along with his brother Pier Giacomo, and Sancarlo, created for the first time in 1970, sum up the spirit of the period joining the formal experimentation to technical innovation.

A partire dalle avanguardie artistiche del secolo scorso, il design italiano continua a ispirare movimenti, espressioni e modi d’essere che trovano nella linea italiana la manifestazione più autentica della cultura del progetto. Qual è, dunque, il segreto del design italiano? Dove si nasconde il suo intramontabile spirito che tutt’oggi continua a guidare l’evoluzione della disciplina? Dalla fiducia in un futuro migliore al rigore tecnologico; dalla volontà di sperimentare e mettersi in gioco all’inimitabile coerenza formale, la linea italiana rappresenta l’espressione materiale di un pensiero collettivo, condiviso all’unanimità tra i più importanti protagonisti dell’epoca. Pier Giacomo e Achille Castiglioni, Umberto Riva e Gianfranco Frattini fanno parte di questo gruppo di progettisti illuminati del secolo scorso che hanno condiviso idee, pensieri e speranze per la disciplina progettuale, unendo il saper-fare manuale – caratteristico della produzione industriale del belpaese – all’ingegno tecnico, con la speranza di trasportare il mito del ‘buon design’ italiano nella realtà di tutti i giorni. Oggi, mezzo secolo dopo la loro creazione, i progetti realizzati da questi grandi maestri del passato continuano a rendere viva l’anima della linea italiana attraverso una serie di riedizioni realizzate da Tacchini, con la volontà di preservare e comunicare gli ideali che hanno guidato la loro creazione. Mantenendo l’integrità dei progetti originali, Tacchini ha adattato i disegni dei designer alla produzione odierna, trasportando la cultura del design passato alla contemporaneità.
There are designs which are born classics in name only. Babela is one of those designs and one of those names. In 1958 Achille Castiglioni designed this small armchair to add to the furniture of the Milan chamber of commerce. Comfort meets form and function which is revealed in the possibility of stacking this seat up like a tower. Its design was simple and archetypical, with a particular mixture of materials, visual texture and tactile effects.

“A piece of design is the result of the joint effort of many people with different and specific technical skills, industrial, commercial and aesthetic. The designer’s work is the expressive synthesis of this collective effort. The main feature of a project is based on the relationship among several operators: from the manager to the last worker.”
Babela Chair designed by Achille & Pier Giacomo Castiglioni (1958), base T46 White.

Shown with: Split Low Table, base T02 White, top T57 White.
Achille and Pier Giacomo Castiglioni designed Babela, a stackable chair, for the Milan chamber of commerce. They imagined a tower made by seats, stackable and easily transportable. Its design was simple and archetypical, with a particular mixture of materials, visual texture and tactile effects. On the other hand, Sancarlo, plays with rounded and organic shapes to allow a flexible seat, and, at the same time, suitable to the comfort of person.

Babela and Sancarlo

Achille Castiglioni and Diabolo (photograph H. Findlater)

Per Babela, una sedia impilabile disegnata in origine per la Camera di commercio di Milano, Achille e Pier Giacomo Castiglioni immaginano una torre fatta di sedute, facilmente trasportabili e impilabili, caratterizzata da un design lineare e archetipico, reso interessante da una particolare interazione tra materiali, texture visive ed effetti tattili. Sancarlo, dall’altro lato, gioca con forme organiche e tondeggianti per costruire una seduta flessibile e adattabile alle esigenze del corpo umano.
“My method is to take out, again and over again, until I will find the main design component. The minimum sign, the minimum shape, required by the function. I want to get to say: less than this I can’t do it.”

Achille Castiglioni
The Castiglioni studio was established in 1938 by brothers Livio and Pier Giacomo, while for certain projects, Luigi Caccia Dominioni also worked alongside them. In 1944 Achille joined the studio: the partnership between the three brothers continued until 1952, when Livio set up on his own, while continuing to work with Pier Giacomo and Achille for some special projects. Achille and Pier Giacomo worked together without any clear division of roles, but with equal participation, and constant discussion and exchange of ideas. This collaboration continued until Pier Giacomo died in 1968. Achille continued to work in the same way as he always had done with his brother, and indeed it is almost impossible to detect any difference in his approach to projects, other than the natural social and technological changes that came about with the evolving times.

11. Sancarlo (Armchair), historical picture.
Sancarlo (cat. Sofa) designed by Achille Castiglioni (1982), base T13 Bordeaux.

Shown with:

- E63 (cat. Lamp) and
- Daze (cat. Coffe Table) developed by Tacchini Edizioni.
The Sancarlo armchair is a treatise on statics, ergonomics, function and geometry. Commissioned at the time by Driade, Achille Castiglioni has taken up again the idea of the Sanluca, designed a few decades earlier with his brother Pier Giacomo. The result is the breaking-down of the seat into a series of cushions which curve to each part of the body they have to support.
Gianfranco Frattini is one of that skilled generation of architects and designers, who have marked the Italian design movement of the last century. Frattini’s projects are characterized by a formal elegance, which is able to transmit clearly, and simply the ideas and thoughts that led to their creation. At the beginning of his career, he was a collaborator of Giò Ponti. Over the years, Gianfranco Frattini will develop a personal and symptomatic approach to the design based on a careful formal and structural research.

Gianfranco Frattini fa parte di quell’abile generazione di architetti e designer che hanno segnato il movimento del design italiano del secolo scorso. I progetti di Frattini vantano un’eleganza formale che comunica con chiarezza e semplicità le idee e le riflessioni che hanno portato alla loro creazione. Collaboratore di Giò Ponti all’inizio della carriera, Gianfranco Frattini svilupperà nel corso degli anni un personale e sintomatico approccio alla progettazione guidato da un’attenta ricerca formale e strutturale.

Agnese is the name of the new version of the 849, the armchair designed by Gianfranco Frattini around 1956 in his Milan studio, in via Sant’Agnese in fact. All the style and radiance of an age take shape in the lines of this armchair which is much more than a classic and almost an archetype.
Agnese (cat. Armchair) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1956), base T43 Dark Walnut.
Agnese and Sesann

Agnese and Sesann have the same soul of design, with two different visual configurations. Designed in 1956, in the studio in via Sant’Agnese in Milan, Agnese comes out from the idea to realize the archetype of the informal armchair. It is characterized by an upholstery seat – geometric and basic – with a classical linear and wooden base. On the other hand, Sesann is characterized by an organic and informal shape, made by wrapping a tubular metal around a soft and upholstered seat. Agnese, the armchair, is produced in a very accurate way and with extreme fidelity to the original design; moreover, following from Frattini’s original project, the armchair is accompanied by a matching ottoman. Agnese is just the beginning of a comprehensive project that aims to support the revival of a great designer’s style but also an entire atmosphere of interior decor.

Agnese and Sesann

Agnese, the armchair, is produced in a very accurate way and with extreme fidelity to the original design; moreover, following from Frattini’s original project, the armchair is accompanied by a matching ottoman. Agnese is just the beginning of a comprehensive project that aims to support the revival of a great designer’s style but also an entire atmosphere of interior decor.
Sesann (cat. Sofa) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1970), structure T28 Polished Black Chrome, feet T49 Grey. Shown with: Shelter (cat. Armchair), base T27 Matt Black Chrome and Cage (cat. Low Table), base T07 Black, top T41 Smoked Mirror.
Respecting the thought of Gianfranco Frattini, the new edition of Sesann keeps the spirit of the product intact. Characterized by a fabric or leather upholstery, Sesann owes its typical soft and enveloping form to the cold foam structure, encircled with an architectural tubular steel (chrome or painted), with feet in ash wood. The particular configuration of Sesann – both formal and functional – constitutes the basis for a system of products characterized by the same structural elements, but declined in unique and fascinating objects. This approach of synthesis and reduction, proposed by Frattini, produced a formally elegant design, conceptually elaborated and, above all, unique.

Rispettando il pensiero di Gianfranco Frattini, la nuova edizione di Sesann è stata realizzata mantenendo intatto lo spirito del prodotto. Caratterizzato da un rivestimento in tessuto o pelle, Sesann deve la sua tipica forma, soffice ed avvolgente, allo scheletro schiumato a freddo, contenuto da una struttura architettonica in tubolare di acciaio (cromato o verniciato), che poggia sui piedini in legno di frassino. La particolare configurazione di Sesann – allo stesso tempo formale e funzionale – costituisce le basi per un sistema di prodotti caratterizzati dagli stessi elementi strutturali, declinati, però, in oggetti unici e affascinanti. Questo approccio di sintesi e riduzione proposto da Frattini ha prodotto un design formalmente elegante, concettualmente elaborato e, soprattutto, irripetibile.

Sesann (cat. Sofa) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1970), structure T11 Orange, feet T43 Dark Walnut.
Sesann (cat. Sofa) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1970), structure T28 Polished Black Chrome, feet T49 Grey. Shown with:

- Cage (cat. Low Table), base T27 Matt Black Chrome, top T32 Black Marquinia Marble and base T28 Polished Black Chrome, top T41 Smoked Mirror;
- Agnese (cat. Armchair), base T43 Dark Walnut;
- E63 (cat. Lamp),
- Tarsia (cat. Tray) and
- Umbra (cat. Rug) developed by Tacchini Edizioni.
“Design is... above all an effort to improve reality... I always try to begin with considerations of its function. I ask myself, who needs it, which materials best suit its functions and so on.”

Gianfrancesco Frattini
Giulia and Gio

Relaunch of an original project of Gianfranco Frattini dated 1957, but still actual for its shapes and spirit, Giulia armchair creates in the contemporary space a timeless feeling of beauty, comfort and harmony. A flawless realization, typical of Tacchini’s tradition, from the choice of materials for the embrace-shaped structure, to the ash wood basis dyed dark walnut or grey with artisan taste. Inspired by a classic piece of Italian design designed in 1957 by Gianfranco Frattini and nominated the same year for Compasso d’Oro, Gio is a low table which expresses an idea of rationalist rigor and refined elegance, creating the emotion of a warm bourgeois atmosphere. It is characterized by the linear wood structure and by the ash double face plan dyed dark walnut or grey on one side, or yellow, grey or steel blue laminated on the other side.

Riedizione di un progetto originale di Gianfranco Frattini risalente al 1957, ma ancora attuale nelle forme e nello spirito, la poltrona Giulia fa rivivere nello spazio contemporaneo una sensazione senza tempo di bellezza, comfort ed armonia. Impeccabile la realizzazione, come nella tradizione Tacchini, dalla scelta dei materiali per la scocca dalle forme avvolgenti, alla base in legno di frassino tinto noce scuro o grigio, di sapore artigianale. Tratto da un classico del design italiano, progettato nel 1957 da Gianfranco Frattini e segnalato lo stesso anno per il Compasso D’Oro, Gio è un tavolo basso che esprime un’idea di rigore razionalista e di eleganza raffinata, suscitando l’emozione di una calda atmosfera borghese. È caratterizzato dalla lineare struttura in legno e dal piano bifacciale in frassino tinto noce scuro o grigio da un lato, oppure in laminato giallo, grigio e blu acciaio dall’altro.
Giulia (cat. Armchair) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1970), base T49 Grey.

Shown with: Gio (cat. Low Table), base T49 Grey, top T69 Shiny Grey, Linea (cat. Rug) and Nebula Interiors (cat. Screen), developed by Tacchini Edizioni.
Giulia (cat. Armchair) designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1970), base T49 Grey.

Design Classics
Tacchini Re–Editions

29, 30, 31. Mod. 877, designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1957), historical pictures.
Inspired by a classic piece of Italian design designed in 1957 by Gianfranco Frattini and nominated the same year for Compasso d’Oro, Gio is a low table which expresses an idea of rationalist rigor and refined elegance, creating the emotion of a warm bourgeois atmosphere.

Compasso d’Oro (Golden Compass) is the name of an Industrial Design award originated in Italy in 1954 by the La Rinascente company from an original idea of Gio Ponti and Alberto Rosselli. From 1964 it has been hosted exclusively by Associazione per il Disegno Industriale (ADI). It is the first and most recognized award in its field. The prize aims to acknowledge and promote quality in the field of industrial designs Made in Italy and is awarded by ADI.
Oliver cat. Sofa designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1957), structure T02 White, feet T43 Dark Walnut. Shown with: Gio cat. Low Table, base T 43 Dark Walnut, top T67 Shiny Yellow; Vasum cat. Vase and Linea cat. Rug, developed by Tacchini Edizioni.
Designed by Gianfranco Frattini in 1957 and produced as from the following year, the 872 sofa has achieved a huge success over the years. Minimalist and elegant, it features a lightweight structure in steel with end feet in wood and tufted upholstery on the seat and back, a detail requiring great craft expertise.

Disegnato da Gianfranco Frattini nel 1957 e prodotto a partire dall’anno successivo, il divano 872 ha riscosso negli anni un grandissimo successo. Essenziale ed elegante, è caratterizzato da una struttura leggera in acciaio con piedini terminali in legno e dall’imbottitura capitonné di seduta e schienale, un dettaglio di grande sapienza artigianale.

Looking at the work of Gianfranco Frattini, the great master of modern Italian design, we find that this metaphysical spirit shines through every rounded shape, every detail and combinations of materials that characterize his projects. Frattini’s products summarize, in their particular formal configuration, thoughts, dreams and concerns of modern design: the utopian vision and confidence in a better future, the daily quality of life and the satisfaction that can be drawn from the smallest familiar action.
Lina

Lina is a re-edition of one of the earliest projects designed by Gianfranco Frattini, one of the great masters of Italian design. Nominated in 1955 for the Compasso d’oro, the armchair features an unusual wood frame that lends it a solid, yet lightweight, appearance. Its singularity lies in the slender legs and bent plywood element that supports the side of the seat back and curves up to become the ‘wing’ upon which the armrests sit. A very innovative workmanship technique for its time, carried out today with historical accuracy. An armchair that makes a bold statement, thanks to its timeless style, Lina can be paired with unaffected ease with all the sofas in the Tacchini collection, in residential and contract settings.

35. Lina, designed by Gianfranco Frattini (1955), historical picture.
I love this lamp, and it doesn’t happen so often. I feel it as a friend.

Umberto Riva

A master of lighting, Umberto Riva was born in Milan in 1928 and has worked in design since 1960. Having studied with Carlo Scarpa, Riva pursued his own personal research process via the most widely differing disciplines, from urban spaces to buildings, landscape to interiors, outfitting to the design of lamps and furniture. His most important creations include Casa Frea in Milan, considered to be one of his masterpieces, the redevelopment of Piazza San Nazaro in Milan, restoration of the historic Caffè Pedrocchi in Padua, the design for the work on the Viale del Ministero degli Esteri and Piazza della Farnesina in Rome, the Biblioteca Europea at Porta Vittoria in Milan, the thermal power plants in Catanzaro and Campobasso and a long line of houses, from Milan to Sardinia and Puglia, as well as various designs of lamps and furniture for the biggest names in Italian design. Considered an out-of-the-ordinary architect, Riva has retained an artisan dimension in architecture and design work. His designs are “born drawn”, pencil sketches of a pure and poetic research.

Umberto Riva, portrait.

Maestro della luce, Umberto Riva è nato a Milano nel 1928 e dal 1960 si occupa di progettazione. Allievo di Carlo Scarpa, Riva ha sviluppato una sua personale ricerca, percorrendo i più diversi ambiti disciplinari: dagli spazi urbani agli edifici, dal paesaggio agli interni, dall’allestimento al design di lampade e mobili. Tra le sue realizzazioni più importanti si segnalano casa Frea a Milano, considerato uno dei suoi capolavori, la sistemazione di piazza San Nazaro a Milano, il restauro dello storico Caffè Pedrocchi di Padova, il progetto per la sistemazione
del viale del Ministero degli Esteri e di Piazza della Farnesina a Roma, la Biblioteca Europea di Porta Vittoria a Milano, le centrali termoelettriche di Catanzaro e Campobasso e una lunga serie di case, da Milano alla Sardegna e alla Puglia, oltre a vari progetti di lampade e arredi per i più importanti nomi del design italiano. Considerato un architetto fuori dal comune, Riva ha conservato una dimensione artigianale del fare architettura e del fare design. I suoi progetti nascono “disegnati”, schizzi a matita di una ricerca pura e poetica.

E63

E63 (Eng) The design for this lamp dates back to 1963, and today it is reissued with the name E63. This alphanumeric code is a reflection of the intellectual complexity of its designer, Umberto Riva: part architect, part designer, part artist, part light-tamer, and a whole lot of all these things. A table lamp designed with great precision, featuring simple lines around broad surfaces, that seemingly give a solid form to the light itself: steel, almost armour, protecting the precious source.

E63 (Ita) Nel 1963 nasce il modello di questa lampada, oggi rieditata con il nome E63. In una sigla alfanumerica, si racchiude la complessità intellettuale del suo progettista, Umberto Riva: un po’ architetto, un po’ designer, un po’ artista, un po’ addomesticatore della luce, e molto di tutto ciò. Una lampada da tavolo disegnata in modo esatto, con linee semplici per contenere superfici ampie, che sembrano dare forma solida alla luce stessa: acciaio, quasi come una corazza a proteggere la preziosa fonte.
E63 (cat. Lamp) designed by Umberto Riva, structures T23 Polished Chrome, T24 Satin Chrome, T25 Matt Champagne Gold, T75 Zinc Yellow, T76 Pastel Green. Developed by Tacchini Edizioni.
Today, half a century after their creation, the projects realized by these great masters of the past continue to keep alive the soul of the Italian line through a series of revivals made by Tacchini. Castiglioni brothers’ Babela and Sancarlo, Gianfranco Frattini’s Agnese, Gio, Giulia, Lina, Oliver and Sesann, Umberto Riva’s E63 lamp, represent the result of a meticulous collaboration among designers, artisans and producers. Tacchini proposes these pieces with the desire to preserve and communicate the ideals that have guided their creation. Maintaining the integrity of the original projects, Tacchini has adapted the designer’s drawings to modern production. In this way, it has transferred the past design culture to the present.

“I love this lamp, and it doesn’t happen so often. I feel it as a friend. This lamp represents much of my professional history, my approach to the realization of the first projects. It was born from an open contest by Artemide, I was 35 years old. Initially this lamp should have been made of plastic, but with metal it obtained dry shapes and precision of the edges. Think about the power obtained with these rigid materials, a result which is impossible to have with plastic.” Umberto Riva, “An open shape”, T’Journal 8
Maestri or “masters” are those charismatic figures capable of teaching and handing down an art through their direct actions and also through the inheritance of their actual works. In design the maestri communicate through the classics, timeless designs far from any idea of fashions and trends yet so powerful as to produce a style naturally. Tacchini has set aside some rooms in its living environment for the classics and the masters who have designed them, in a process of revivals which are a challenge and a lesson on contemporary style.