

**Inaugurated at the presence of Undersecretary of State Lucia Borgonzoni, the February edition of WHITE 2023, with a new path under the banner of qualitative research, marks a return to WHITE's origins, but also internationalization and aesthetic evolution.**

**which led to an 8% increase in attendance of top foreign buyers and more than 18.000 total, consistent with the February 2022 edition.**

**Foreign exhibiting companies account for half of the entirety of the event.**

**A 450% growth of interactions on Instagram, which exceeded 50.000 on the days of the show, totaling 270 thousand Impressions and more than 15.000 visits to WHITE's Properties.**

An edition in the sign of intercultural connection, the February 2023 edition of WHITE, which - opened on February 24<sup>th</sup>, in the presence of Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture Lucia Borgonzoni – has come to its conclusion, with a remarkable turnout of foreign visitors over the four days of the Milan Fashion Week and that has brought to the Tortona Fashion District an innovative proposal of brands from all over the world. The independent and unconventional aesthetic vision confirms WHITE, once again, as an international platform for a market in need of continuous renewal.

The event, sponsored by the City of Milan, was also made possible thanks to the support of **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI) and ICE - Agency for the Promotion Abroad and Internationalization of Italian Companies and in partnership with Confartigianato Imprese.**

**Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture Lucia Borgonzoni:** "Art, creativity and innovation find in WHITE the ideal place in which to merge, in order to express always new forms. A meeting point for talent and international buyers, the event is synonymous with sustainability, a pillar on which its activities have rested since its inception. A path also indicated by the Ministry of Culture, which has invested Pnrr funds for the development and growth of cultural and creative enterprises in a green and digital key.

"Fashion," Borgonzoni continued, "represents one of the most important economic sectors for Italy. To keep it that way, we must involve young people in the creative and production processes: only in this way will we be able to give continuity to this industry, which is fundamental for its cultural contribution and has given the country so much in terms of wealth and employment."

Among the most significant attendees, buyers from major department stores and boutiques worldwide, such as Antonioli GROUP, Shinsegae (KR), Ounass.com (UAE), Villa Baboushka (EGY), Le Bon Marché (FR), Autograph (UK), LN-CC (UK), Matches Fashion (UK), Chapter4 (SA), Pattern (SA), Personage (SA), Vase (JP), Delta (JP), Opener (KR), Permanent Modern (JP), Sanki (JP), Gravity Pope (CND), Harvey Nichols (KWT), Peek & Cloppenburg (DE), David Jones (AUS), Hudson's Bay (CND), Pauw (NL), Maxwell&Co (USA), Lane Crawford (HK).

**Massimiliano Bizzi – WHITE's founder** - says, *"The energy and the atmosphere at WHITE and the return of the big names of international buyers, makes us understand that the selection strategy undertaken on quality over quantity, is the right one. With this in mind, I remain optimistic about the path taken: Milan is capable of creating new prospects for development and growth within the international fashion scene."*

*The selection of the designers chosen for the Secret Rooms: **OLUBIYI THOMAS, ROMEO HUNTE, DREAMING ELI, RIZ POLI, STUDIO PANSTERS**, confirms the expertise of Simona Severini's scouting and selection work, with the aim of bringing out the rising stars of the fashion scene.*

In WHITE's lofts, **Stefano Mortari, Avant Toi and Maria Calderara** presented their new collections, which speak to the contemporary woman in an evolved aesthetic key and qualitative research that is expressed through unique pieces, innovative design and unexpected volumes.

**Denim**, this season's great protagonist, was presented through two strong and yet, diametrically opposed, interpretations: on one hand, the Los Angeles Vintage team, which finds its first inspiration in street markets and takes shape with a community-driven and eco-sustainable project, using already existing and unrepeatably garments, selected with the support of Torgom, one of the most important warehouses in **Los Angeles**; on the other hand, the interpretation by a new generation designers - such as **Nelly Serobyanyan produced by Zakaryan Jeans LLC and Inga Manukyan produced by Nanman LLC** - who from Armenia and Moldova have given new prestige to this fabric, reworked in a couture key for palazzo pants, dresses and bustier tops with innovative washes and finishes found in tie dye denim with patterns florals, reusing waste materials that become raw material for striking knitwear collections.

Among this season's new entries was **Bunzaburo**, which brought its very personal version of Shibori with a collection dedicated to the contemporary woman. This ancient art of tie-dye perfected over more than 100 years during the Edo period, through ancient gestures handed down by tradition, from sewing to tying to dyeing the fabric, gives great personality to each creation: from the most dynamic and driving to delicate ones that look to a timeless classic.

**Nizhoni's** handmade knitwear with a very high color impact and defined by a bohemian personality is made of 50 percent high-quality recycled yarns knitted by a team of skilled hands in Europe, supporting small communities, ethical work and a sustainable lifestyle.

Moreover, high craft realities such as that of **Marianna Mazza**, for a footwear collection defined by a timeless elegance in which family's jeweler's business and footwear expertise, converge.

The key to its design lies in the manual skills of capable threaders, able of creating small, jeweled accessories, supported by the technical knowledge of artisans, experts in applying precious stones on shoes.

At **SuK** unique handcrafted realities such as that of **Maison Rode's** 100 percent sustainable necklaces, made from the recovery of old inner tubes by cutting each leaf by hand until they become true sculptures. **Sitting Suits'** quilts created by reusing plastic bottles and painted and printed with signature graphics. **Glovetoo** gloves, a handcrafted project by Valentina Ambrosi who hand paints each one and customizes it with bangs or bijoux, turning them into real collectible accessories. Positive feedback also for the handmade knitwear in fine yarns designed and produced in Italy by Simona Lavelli under the brand **Nogoon**.

The focus on brand mix and intercultural connection also found space with in-depth discussions and moments of dialogue and aggregation. From the cocktail party organized to unveil the creativity of 5 Norwegian talents in the presence of the **Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway in Italy Johan Vibe**, to **The Indigenous Way** panel held at Mudec - Museo Delle Culture, realized in collaboration with the Embassy of Canada in Italy and IFA Indigenous Fashion Arts. The event addressed the theme of creativity of Canada's indigenous First Nations, in the presence of Ambassador Elissa Golberg, and exhibiting designers. In addition, a panel entitled **Is diversity and inclusion a pipe dream? Overcoming tokenism in Europe and beyond**, in collaboration with **FMA - Fashion Minority Alliance** and moderated by international costume and fashion journalist, lecturer and creative advisor Cristina Manfredi, which featured speakers Barbara Kennedy-Brown - founder FMA, Olubiyi Thomas - designer, Cassidy Swinger - activist, Elena Berardi - Schwa partner, Judith Saint Jermain - designer, Romeo Hunte - designer.

*"WHITE offered to Fashion Minority Alliance and its consortium of designers and voices, an incredible opportunity to push their mission on a world stage. Our panel discussion on diversity and openness to work together gave us a sense of hope that we can continue to create real leadership opportunities for marginalized communities, in Italy and beyond its borders,"* says Sofia Celeste Director FMA Italy.

For more information:

Raffaella Imò  
Responsabile Ufficio Stampa  
WHITE  
Tel +39 02 34592785  
[raffaella.imo@whitepress.it](mailto:raffaella.imo@whitepress.it)