

Sonia Pedrazzini moves between art, design and communication with a clear eye for aesthetics. While contemporary society plays a vital role in her work, one of her projects stands out for its roots in the practices of one of the most renowned Italian still life masters and modern realists, Giorgio Morandi. Her translation of his still life into real life gives breath to a lovely arrangement of candles, vases and other objects found in Morandi's original works—the beginning of a limited collection called Le Morandine.

In conversation with

As told to Ana Teodorescu by Sonia Pedrazzini

Photography by Giui Russo

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What does Le Morandine mean to you, and how do you fuse your design process with the original paintings of Morandi himself?

Le Morandine combines eclectic and transversal design from theory to practice—and back again. Everyday objects turn into concept design by carefully exploring the possibilities of craftsmanship. While I take references from the art world, the natural environment and contemporary culture, I always highlight the expertise and techniques that are part of the narrative as well as my poetic approach when creating objects. In doing so, I start off by being analytical, which eventually turns into surprises and doubts, nourished by great enthusiasm, energy and dreams. It's like travelling in an unexplored land; I like getting lost on trails that lengthen the path or that do not always lead to a definite goal.

How do you channel Morandi's creative process? How does it influence your aesthetics in general?

Looking at Morandi's operas, I realised that, before painting them, he collected common everyday objects such as vases, bottles and knick-knacks. Having visited his home-studio in Bologna and having studied his compositional technique, I noticed that he was playing with objects he actually owned. He created real sets that he repainted in the most suitable colours to then immortalise them in his paintings. Having his process as a starting point, I thought to follow the reverse path by recreating objects that Giorgio Morandi had initially reproduced in his paintings through the filter of design. I transfer not only his colours and forms but also his thoughtful attitude and his conceptual way of seeking perfection.

When does colour come into play in your process?

Immediately. The palette of Morandi is a structural part of the atmosphere in his paintings. I use this colour palette to investigate which colours would be suitable for my objects, although it is never easy to select just a few colours to work with out of all the infinite nuances out there. There are some colours which represent Morandi's style more than others, and I have been mainly focusing and playing around those. Only recently I started experimenting with more contemporary colours—if I may call them so—which are not entirely rooted in Morandi's style. That has opened up exciting angles and brought new inspiration. It is always a work in progress; ongoing experimentation that goes on autonomously. The purpose of colour is to enhance the objects and the other way around. For these specific designs, I found the interplay between different shades of yellow to be matching as it resembles vitality, rhythm and movement.

Do you have a general state of mind or mood you want people to arrive at when looking at your art?

I want people to feel the desire to move these objects; I want them to feel the need to play and compose a still life with the objects I design together with other elements—anything from new objects chosen by resonance, affinity or contrast from the owner's own collection. When someone is passionate about the art of still life, one enters a concentrated, creative yet relaxed state of mind. Time expands and the only perceived dimensions are those of space, proportions, equilibrium and light. I would like people to understand that and own Le Morandine to feel the same.

What's the most important message you'd like to send out with Le Morandine?

I am not satisfied if my projects just meet the requirements of manufacturability and functionality. I'm interested in communicating the personality of each object — a sense of energy and unbalanced equilibrium, always in progress. I believe in the animist energy of things, and that every single object of design should possess an essence that goes beyond function, overcoming the common aesthetic and surmounting the limits of design. Often my objects are designed to be touched, taken, moved, acted—objects which invite for interaction between object and human.





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Yellow brick road

Love. Passion. Fury. Violence. Risk. These monochrome states of mind marked our entry into the journey of exploring what a world in red looks like. The Red Sindrom was all about red's ambivalence and intensity, while showcasing the spectrum of one colour by putting it into the perspective of everyday moments. But as fond as we have become of red—it's time for a bright new obsession: yellow.

How did we change our focus from one colour to another? Frankly put, we were more than ready for it. Starting our second issue in one of the darkest seasons of the year, the Scandinavian winter, yellow was the spark we needed. We started noticing hidden yellow gems: in the street, on book covers, when browsing the internet; slowly becoming drawn to it more and more. A coincidence? We don't think so.

Turning to yellow states of mind, the Yellow Sindrom reflects on everything from happiness and optimism, to friendship, but also anxiety and jealousy. It touches upon the warmth and softness of human interactions, as well as the more hidden aspects found in art, food, communication, or design. But before we give too much away, we'd like to invite you once again into our world of colour. So go on, follow the yellow brick road.

- a message from the team -