



Memphis: Back to the 80s



The historic Milanese house presents the pieces by Masanori Umeda, Martine Bedin, Arata Isozaki and Aldo Cibic

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13/09/2021 - On the occasion of the Milan Fuorisalone 2021 (5-10 September), Memphis presents “Night Tales”, a Post Design collection by Masanori Umeda with some historical Memphis works designed by Martine Bedin, Aldo Cibic and Arata Isozaki.

Forty years after the creation of the Memphis Group and the presentation of the famous Tawaraya boxing ring, a new family of products designed by Masanori Umeda, some of them dating from the early eighties – fully in line with the spirit of Memphis – now takes its place in the family of Post Design collections.

The Utamaro series consists of a double bed, sofa and armchair, inspired by the erotic rituals of the Edo period, women and the interiors of traditional homes, as represented in the works of the Japanese painter Kitagawa Utamaro.

These three coordinated furnishing objects, with their massive aesthetic impact, have a blue and fuchsia metal tubular structure, with iconic, black and white chessboard pattern laminate borders, tatami mats, trays with lacquered surfaces and flamboyant coloured silk pillows. Just as he did with his Tawaraya boxing ring, Umeda combines traditional Japanese domestic aesthetics with contemporary Nippon accents and the western taste in furnishings in a remarkable juxtaposition.



The other works designed by Umeda in the early eighties (1982) which are now presented in the “Night Tales” collection are the Medusa table and the Animal Chair, the Gelato lamp and the Star aluminium tray.

The Medusa table is a domestic animal with zigzag legs, reminiscent of the arms of the Murmansk fruit dish by Sottsass. The iridescent, dichroic glass top changes colour with the changing of the light conditions and the angle of viewing, while projecting coloured shadows around the room.

The Animal Chair forms part of one of the Umeda design projects which bring nature and design together to create likable objects which exude instant empathy and emotional involvement.

The Gelato table, wall and ceiling lamp is an object with personality, halfway between an ice cream cone and a clown's hat.

The Star tray is a complex centrepiece for the table or fruit bowl with small coloured handles and a perforated decorative motif in the centre.

In addition Memphis presents a number of works from the Memphis-Milano collection, which have recently been made available once again, in details Negresco by Martine Bedin, Fuji by Arata Isozaki and Atlas by Aldo Cibic.

Negresco, by Martine Bedin (1981), is a multifaceted object, at the same time a work of art, a wall lamp and a decorative panel, in full-coloured laminates featuring daring couplings: pink, yellow, bright green and black. The Negresco prototype is part of the permanent collection of the Pompidou Centre in Paris.



Fuji, by Arata Isozaki (1981), is a couple of small cabinets designed by Arata Isozaki, one of the Japanese architects and designers who were quick to acknowledge the epochal revolution of the Memphis phenomenon and who wanted to become part of it. The small Fuji units already contain the sense of irony, lightness and extravagance which we would later learn to recognise in the enormous and airy building projects of one of the greatest architects of the twentieth century. Atlas, by Aldo Cibic (1983), is an extraordinarily accomplished little table by Aldo Cibic: a strong, forthright and colourful bedroom sculpture.





