

THE DESIGN EDIT

— FOR COLLECTORS AND DREAMERS —

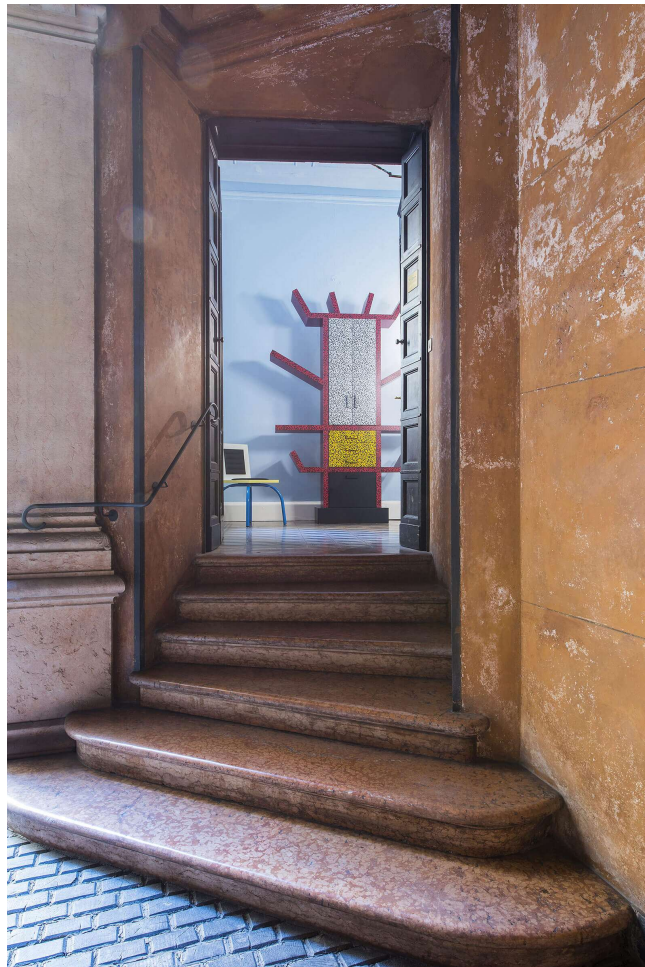
[By Astrid Malingreau / 30th September 2021](#)

<https://thedesignedit.com/milan-design-week-2021-perspective/>

Memphis spirit

The 2021 edition of the furniture fair was renamed the ‘supersalone’, to mark the unique format of this unusual year. Events and exhibitions looked back at the history of Italian design and of the furniture fair itself, as well as to the future.

Historical design was not a big part of the Fuorisalone but particular attention was given to the Memphis group. From 1980 to 1987 this eclectic group of designers disrupted the domestic space with furniture, lighting, textiles and objects that challenged formal values and the parameters of functionality. In response to emerging capitalist forces and technological evolution, Memphis dreamt up new ways to inhabit the world with humour, irreverence and freedom from conventions. Post Design gallery offered a combination of their iconic creations (still in production) alongside collaborations in the non-conformist Memphis spirit with new and seasoned designers.



Installation view, 'Memphis'
COURTESY: Post Design

The main focus here was the latest collection of furniture designed by Masanori Umeda entitled 'Utamaro'. Just as with his 'Tawara' boxing ring – made famous by the Memphis group picture in 1981 – the various seats combine a traditional Japanese aesthetic with flashy colours, tubular metal structures, asymmetry, flamboyant silks and lacquered surfaces.



Masanori Umeda, 'Utamaro' sofa, 2020
COURTESY: Post Design

Although Memphis dissolved only seven years after its creation the related works remain intriguingly contemporary. To honour the group's pioneering vision, Abet Laminati and curators Giulio Iacchetti and Matteo Ragni commissioned eight designers to imagine how the spirit of Memphis would manifest itself today. The result was an exhibition 'SuperSuperfici!' at the ADI Design Museum, where the designs cleverly delved into the philosophical and conceptual roots of the movement to give it a contemporary perspective.