Blog
Current issue
Back issues
Critique
Events

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Newsletter
Education

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Search

**Thursday, 1:00pm
28 February 2013**

Objects of desire

Food design
Graphic design
Reviews
Visual culture

Kama. Sesso e Design
Triennale Design Museum, Milan, Italy
5 December 2012 > 10 March 2013
Curated by Silvana Annicchiarico

Kama. Sesso e Design
Edited by Silvana Annicchiarico
Design by Studio Cerri, with Francesca Ceccoli, Andrea Puppa
Triennale Design Museum / Corraini Editions €34

Designers have been engaged in sex since neolithic times. Well, maybe those neolithics were not designers *per se*, but they were designing sexual representations, such as *Venus* (9500-8700BC), found in Lake Bracciano in Italy, *writes Steven Heller*.

Ronit Baranga,
***Crowd*, 2011.**

Installation

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Eye 100 is well under way, but delayed due to the current crisis. See March 2020 newsletter (link above) for an update.

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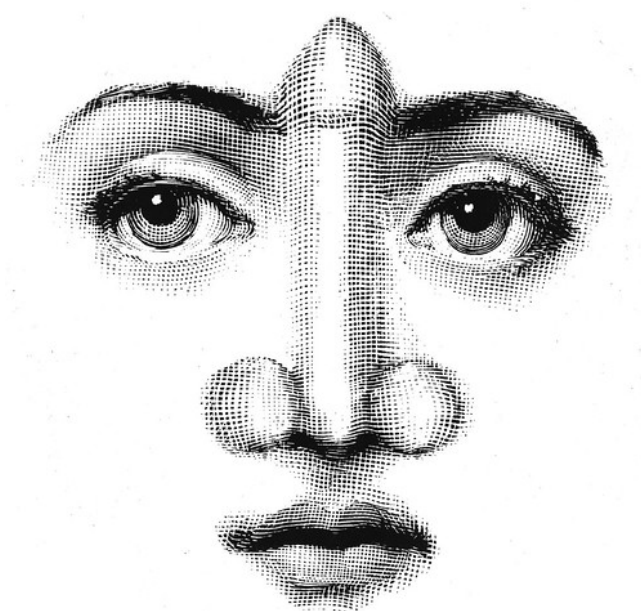Books received #43
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Awards madness
Book design
Brand madness
Critical path
Design education
Design history
Food design
Graphic design
Illustration
Information design

photography (top and below) by Fabrizio Marchesi © Triennale Design Museum.

Since then, designers and artists have had their way with everything from bronze to plastic, turning them into totems of sexual ritual. This and more is in *Kama. Sex and Design*, the bilingual catalogue of the Triennale Design Museum's exhibition of the same name, curated by Silvana Annicchiarico, on display in Milan until Sun 10 March 2013.

Image from Piero Fornasetti's *piatto / dish n. 336*, **1980.**

Blog Post Archive

Annicchiarico notes in an introduction that 'sex is everywhere' and 'crops up in the most miscellaneous creative realms from film and the Web, to art and fashion'. She insists that, 'there is no reference to the place where sex is always to be found: the world of objects'. The reason for this omission, we're told in a somewhat garbled art-historical jargonese, was because of the Modern movement. Yes, our beloved, heroic Modern movement was prudish.

The purpose of this show and catalogue is to celebrate a reappearance of sex in the world of design. It is not, 'intended to be either an exhibition about eroticism or an exhibition about sexuality'. It does, however, set out 'to be an exhibition about objects that draw their morphological inspiration from the genital sexual organs, as well as the sexual relations the body engages in with other bodies.'

Photo by Fabrizio Marchesi © Triennale Design Museum

Organised by obsession or fetish, sections on the male and female organs, breasts, orifices, and buttock-worship share the stage with 'Erotic Food Design' and 'Mating.' While some objects are erotic, few fit any reasoned definition of pornography or sexploitation.

Nonetheless, if you have a priggish side – like those blasted Modernists – the fact that this catalogue is designed in a clinical Modernist manner will not make you any less unsettled. But if you are open to a theme that has been around since time immemorial, then *Kama* will be quite stimulating.

Kama. Sesso e Design continues at the Triennale Design Museum in Milan until 10 March 2013.

Steven Heller, design writer, New York.

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Links   Kama: Sex and Design

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