

INTERNI

THE MAGAZINE OF INTERIORS
AND CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

N° 10 OTTOBRE
OCTOBER 2017

MENSILE ITALIA / MONTHLY ITALY € 10
AT € 19,50 - BE € 18,50 - CA \$can 30 - CH Chf 19,80
DE € 23 - DK kr 165 - E € 17 - F € 18
MC, Côte D'Azur € 18,10 - UK £ 14,50 - PT € 17
SE kr 170 - US \$ 30

Poste Italiane SpA - Sped. in A.P.D.L. 353/03
art.1, comma1, DCB Verona

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SPECIALE MESSICO



UNITED MEXICAN DESIGN

INterview

MICHEL ROJKIND, LE SFIDE
DI MEXICO CITY WDC 2018

INteriors&architecture

CARUSO-TORRICELLA, ALBERTO
EDAA-GARCÍA, LUIS ARTURO
KALACH, VICTOR LEGORRETA,
JORGE PARDO, ROCHA-CARRILLO,
SORDO MADALENO ARQUITECTOS,
TEN ARQUITECTOS

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LA SCENA CONTEMPORANEA,
L'ANALISI DI ANA ELENA MALLET

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TRA LOCAL E GLOBAL
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Mexico City

I PERCORSI DEL DESIGN
E DELL'OSPITALITÀ

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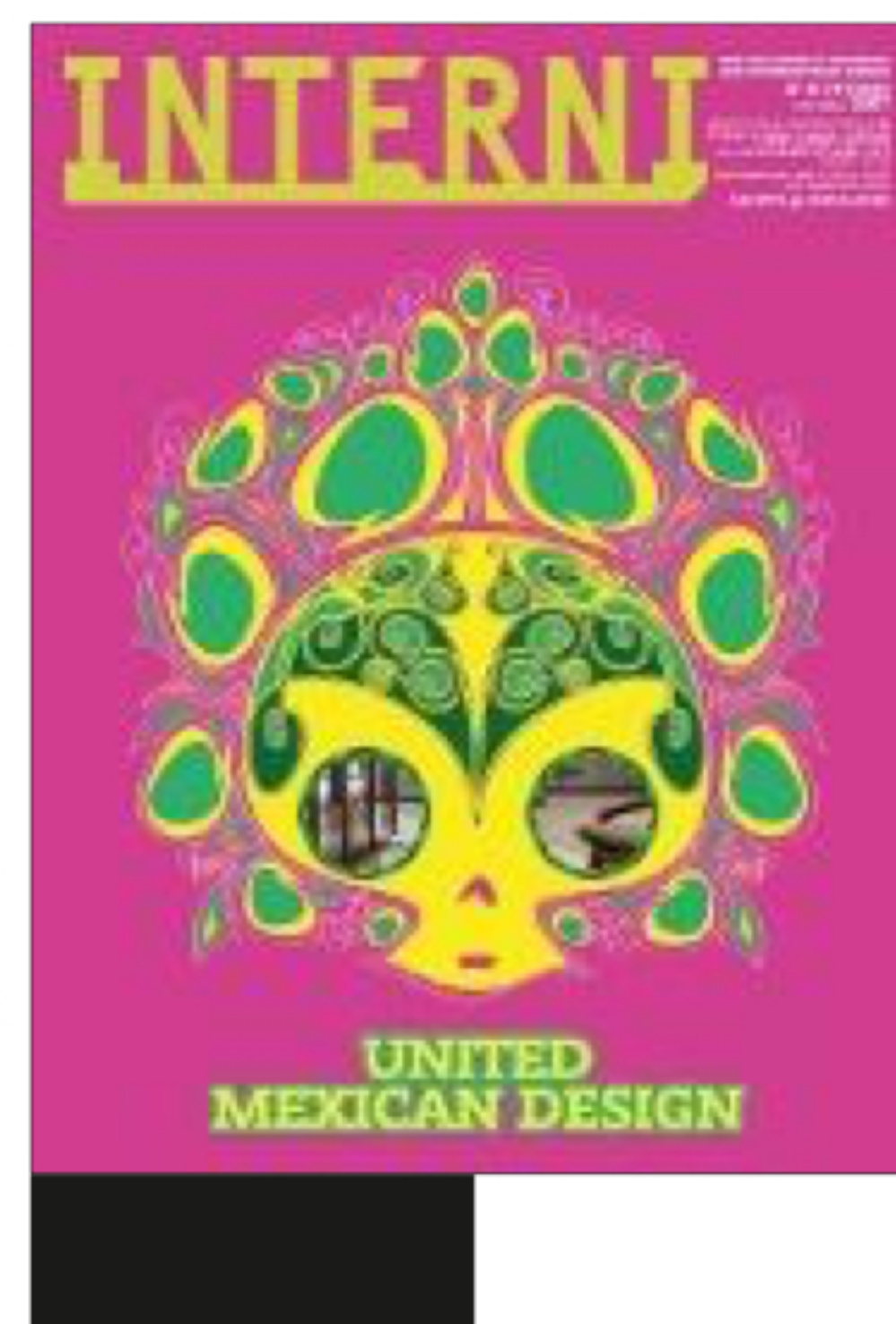
LA MAGIA DEL COLORE
TENDENZA LEGNO

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ottobre/October 2017

In copertina: Due prodotti di **Molteni&C** – l'armadio Gliss Master disegnato da Vincent Van Duysen e la poltrona D.156.3 disegnata da Gio Ponti – fanno da testimonial del design italiano nel suo 'viaggio' in Messico, cui è dedicata la seconda monografia di *Interni* in previsione di Mexico City WDC 2018. A rappresentare il Paese nord-americano è la "Catrina con penacho", la maschera usata come decorazione in occasione della festività dei morti del 2 novembre, nella gioiosa interpretazione grafica dell'illustratore-artista messicano Martin Lopeztovar.

On the cover: Two products by **Molteni&C** – wardrobe Gliss Master designed by Vincent Van Duysen and armchair D.156.3 designed by Gio Ponti – are the showcase products of Italian design in its "journey" to Mexico, the country on which the second monograph of *Interni* Magazine is focussed in view of Mexico City WDC 2018. The North American country is represented by its "Catrina con penacho", the mask used for decoration during the Day of the Dead on 2nd November, in the joyful graphic interpretation by Mexican artist-illustrator Martin Lopeztovar.



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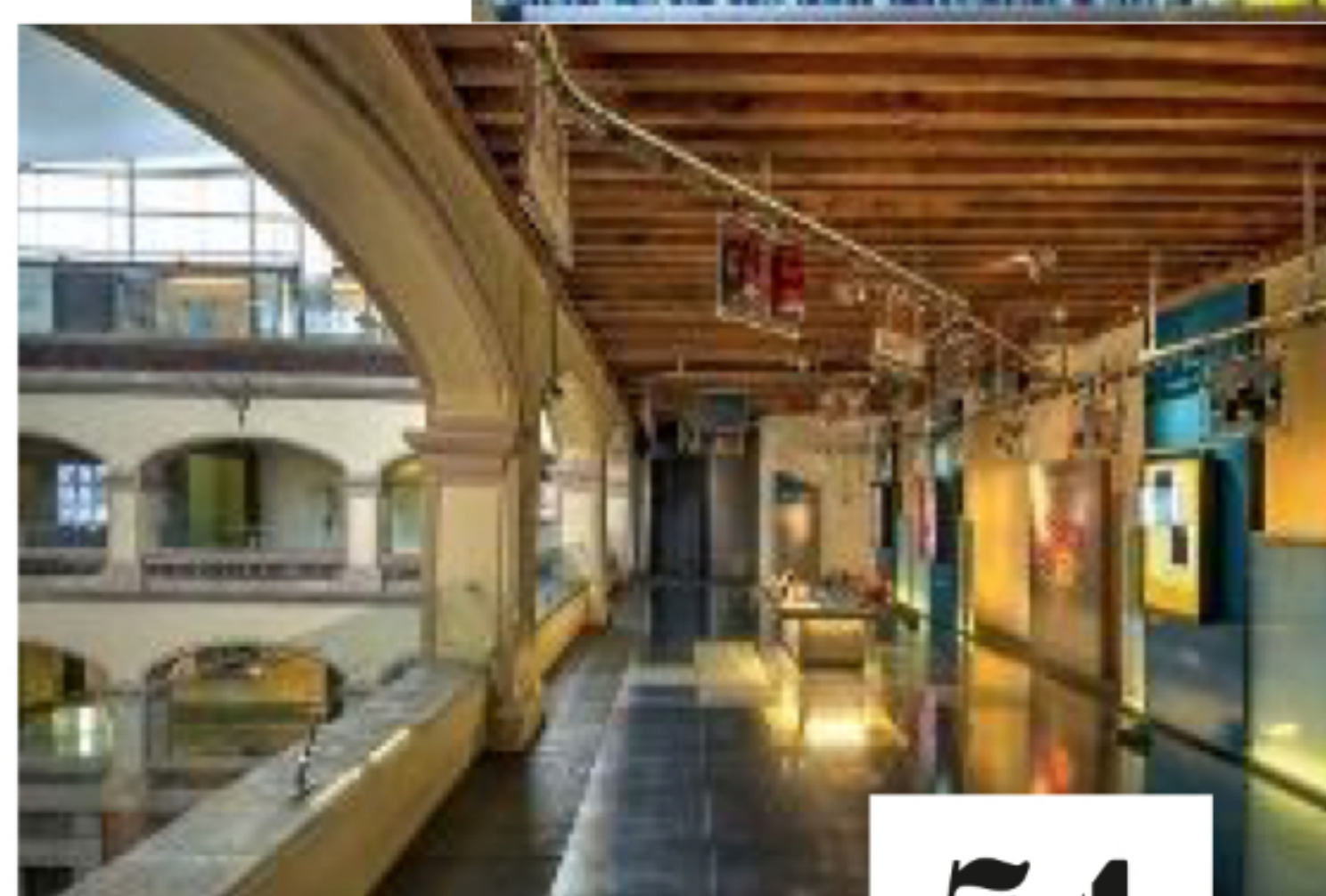
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IN ORIGINE



È un **rapporto sinergico**, quello che lega il progetto messicano contemporaneo all'**Europa** e al **resto del mondo**. Tra riscoperta delle **radici artigianali** e tensione all'**internazionalizzazione**, le ricerche e le espressioni che oggi identificano il design

di Domitilla Dardi

Per capire meglio cosa stia accadendo oggi sulla scena del design messicano è utile fare un salto indietro di quasi dieci anni. Nell'annata 2008-2009, infatti, due progetti legati al Messico conquistano l'attenzione delle cronache internazionali. Il primo è un tappeto disegnato da un gruppo di designer messicani per il marchio spagnolo Nanimarquina. Si chiamano NEL Colectivo e sono Ricardo Casas, Cecilia León de la Barra, Héctor Esrawe, Alejandro Castro ed Emiliano Godoy. Il tappeto mostra un linguaggio assolutamente internazionale, quasi concettuale nella forma e nel contenuto: un'isola bianca su fondo blu dal quale si staglia un piccolo, inerme orso polare, quale riferimento al riscaldamento del globo terrestre.

Il secondo progetto riguarda una ricerca condotta da Hella Jongerius che, grazie all'associazione The Nature Conservancy insieme al Cooper-Hewitt Museum di New York, approda in Messico per riscoprire un materiale antico, il lattice naturale derivato dagli alberi nella foresta pluviale. Il risultato sarà la collezione Chicle, vasi in terracotta che dialogheranno con la gomma americana secondo una visione a dir poco inedita. I due progetti evidenziano strade ben delineate: la tensione verso il mondo e il mercato internazionale da parte dei designer messicani e, allo stesso tempo, la riscoperta da parte dei designer europei di tecniche, materiali, processi artigianali che li portano nei Paesi più ricchi di questo genere di tradizioni, quale è il Messico.

Sopra, **Ana Jimenez**, *Los Enmascarados*, 2014. Una serie di mobili contenitori dallo spiccato carattere animistico: realizzati in legno naturale e colorato, sono ispirati alle maschere del folklore popolare.

seums... Starting with the academic institutions. At the same time, today, a large number of designers have decided to focus their activity on understanding tradition: in terms of values, essence and labor. The collective practices, or honest, creative and linear collaboration between the designers and craftsmen is part of the current setting. It is a vibrant, proactive and ongoing sector. Bi Yuu, Oax-i-fornia, Oscar Hagerman and Moisés Hernández and his Diario brand, or il Colectivo 1050, are part of this movement, which is undoubtedly doing everything to allow Mexican design to emerge worldwide. I am not able to predict the future of design in Mexico, but I can foresee a rich, active and ever changing scene. The history, essence and tradition must become a crucial part of the contemporary debate; nevertheless, at the same time, we must seek a partnership between industries and new technologies. Mixed economies, semi-artisanal processes, constant dialogs and much experimentation must become a vital part of what is going to happen.

CAPTIONS: pag. 81 *From the Oax-i-fornia collection, the Blowfish lamp designed by Frederik Jimenez and, on the next page, the black ceramic piece designed by Raul Cabra. Oax-i-fornia is a multidisciplinary design study that, through workshops, promotes partnerships between designers, artists and craftsmen from Oaxaca, Mexico.* **pag. 82** *On the side, Héctor Esrawe, “Raw Material,” 2015 exhibition at the Franz Meyer Museum, in Mexico City (Picture courtesy of Héctor Esrawe). Above, from left to right: La Lonja Mercantil, travelling design market in Mexico (picture courtesy of La Lonja): three glimpses of the design section of the 2014 edition of Zona Maco, the modern and contemporary art trades show in Mexico City (picture courtesy of Ana Elena Mallet). On the side: a dress made with shopping bags, designed by Emily Jan for the Oax-i-fornia collection; the 2013 edition of the Abierto Mexicano de Diseño, the international design festival scheduled in Mexico City from the 18th to the 22nd of October 2017 (picture courtesy of Ana Elena Mallet).* **pag. 83** *From the Oax-i-fornia collection, the Miss Manners tablecloth designed by Emily Jan.*

P84. ORIGINALLY

article Domitilla Dardi

A SYNERGETIC RELATIONSHIP CONNECTS CONTEMPORARY MEXICAN DESIGN TO EUROPE AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. REDISCOVERING CRAFT ROOTS AND WITH A LEANING TOWARDS INTERNATIONALIZATION, RESEARCH AND EXPRESSIONS THAT IDENTIFY LATIN AMERICAN DESIGN

In order to better understand what is happening now on the scene of Mexican design, going back almost ten years can be useful. In 2008-2009, two projects connected with Mexico gained the attention of international news. The first was a rug designed by a group of Mexican designers for Spanish brand Nanimarquina. Their name was NEL Colectivo and they are Ricardo Casas, Cecilia León de la Barra, Héctor Esrawe, Alejandro Castro and Emiliano Godoy. The rug had an absolutely international language, almost conceptual in its shape and content: a white island on a blue background from which there emerged a small, defenceless Polar bear, as a reference to global warming. The second was a research project carried out by Hella Jongerius who, thanks to the association The Nature Conservancy together with the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, New York, came to Mexico to rediscover an ancient material, natural latex taken from rainforest trees. The result was the Chicle collection, terracotta pots in dialogue with chewing-gum according to a rather unusual approach. These two projects showed clearly defined roads: a leaning towards the world and the international market by Mexican designers and, at the same time, a rediscovery by European designers of craft techniques, materials and processes that took them to those countries where these traditions are richer, such as Mexico. A few years later, many Mexican talents came to Europe to study and would learn to what extent design in a small series can become richer by exchanging with ancient craft traditions, and came back home with many new perspectives. At the same time, many of them continued to tend towards the series international market of medium and large scale. Two of the representatives of NEL Colectivo, Alejandro Castro and Emiliano Godoy, set up the Pirwi brand in 2007, one of the strongest series companies in their country and with good fame abroad. Their way of conceiving design, like that of Héctor Esrawe, the 'senior' designer in the group, is very close to that of many of their European, Eastern and American colleagues. And the Mexican side in their products can be found in the materials and manufacture, much less in the look of such products that are mostly in line with global production. In terms of rediscovering craft roots, the most interesting cases are those where designers and craftspeople meet and give life not just to products but also to true unusual commercial forms for local situations, with the help, of course, of the web. Their stories are a true exchange on equal footings: innovation for tradition, contemporary experiments serving ancient techniques, a new approach for old materials. It happened, for example, to Liliana Ovalle who in 2015 worked together with Colectivo 1050°, a platform that markets and protects ancient Oaxaca ceramics, based on the work of Innovando la tradición, a network of craftspeople and designers set up by Kythzia Barrera, a designer who graduated in Eindhoven. Ovalle, a Mexican designer based in London, came in touch with the group of Mujeres del Barrio Rojo, an incredible community of craftswomen who work together, linked by family relationships and their knowledge of ceramic techniques. The result is a series of Open Fires vases and plates, where black and red colouring is obtained by burning red ceramic for a second time. Liliana works by adding her culture of contemporary designer, used to exact dimensions, to the unpredictability of their techniques. “These women,” she explains, “do not work with centimetres or technical drawings, therefore their questions had more to do with the quantity of water necessary to make the pieces, for example. This approach is totally different from the one I am used to, but many of our conversations oc-

curred by means of Whatsapp. We did not use centimetres, but we talked with Whatsapp!”. The pressure between local icon and international resonance, between past and present is shown, in other terms, also in the project by Moises Hernandez, a designer of Mexican origins who graduated from ECAL in Lausanne, and who re-interpreted for Volt one of the national glories: the football. He drew inspiration from folklore masks, while Ana Jimenez, who graduated from Central Saint Martins, together with Los Enmascarados, is author of anthropomorphist, animist, magic and colourful pieces of furniture, full of mystery like fairy tales and legends. Also the Ad Hoc group, established in 2014 by designer Juan José Nemer and architect Mauricio Alvarez, chooses the road of putting together ancient and modern, by mastering techniques and details. Clear evidence is his woodworking production, where often legs are turned with quotations from the past that resonate like precious pearls, as in the Antelmo tables. Or, even more straightforward, in the use of the Papel Picado technique, the paper inlay for decorations for popular festivals, used to make the surface of Huixcolotla container more valuable. Fernando Laposse, another Mexican who graduated from the Central Saint Martins, recently made for Selfridge’s in London an installation that plays on a new interpretation of a material and a craft technique, Cachetadas, sugar lollipops prepared for parties. The layers that make up the installation work with incredible effectiveness in his research on overlapping colours, achieving results that the author then uses in his glass-working activity. Mexico resonates in our mind also for its textile tradition, which is one of the most ancient and famous in the world. Here the story receives some Italian hues. Maddalena Forcella from Italy moved to Mexico and spent twenty years studying local textile techniques and the secrets of vegetal dyes. She worked in close contact, in Chiapas and in Oaxaca, with female craft communities that have always handed down their art by their hands and voices. This partnership now generates iridescent fibres that change with the harvest and the seasons because they totally come from natural plants and wool. The result is rugs that recall the waves of the sea or stormy skies, where the ever changing raw material is the same as life. Such a different colour from industrial colours, to which we have become so used, and so difficult to accept in its variability, when market asks for plastic certainties. A world of colours that, if we were able to recognize them, would reveal its long history, starting from far away in time and space to get straight to our dulled senses. Because it is very clear that we must come or go from very far away to recognize the value of what is closest to us.

CAPTIONS: pag. 84 *Above, Ana Jimenez, Los Enmascarados, 2014. A series of storage units with a strong animistic character: made of natural and coloured wood, they take inspiration from folk masks.* **pag. 85 Fernando Laposse, Colour Chandelier, installation for Selfridges in London. Overlapping layers of different colours create a great impact surface. The secret lies in the raw material used: this is not wood, but colourful sugar according to the Cachetadas tradition. Cachetadas are the typical lollipops of popular feast days. A research work that leads to more in-depth knowledge on blown glass, that the author has been exploring for years. **pag. 86** *Below, Studio Ad Hoc, series of tables Antelmo, created for craftsman Antelmo from Santa Maria Rayón. Their neat shapes combine with legs which are typical of the traditional lathed work by Mexican carpenters.* **Liliana Ovalle, Open Fires, 2015. Stemming from the co-operation with the group of craftswomen Mujeres del Barrio Rojo through the Colectivo 1050° organization, this collection of vases and plates provides a new twist to Oaxaca’s traditional red ceramic. Objects are characterized by very original signs due to the combustion-based double firing process they are submitted to. **pag. 87** *Above and opposite, Moises Hernandez, Heritage, 2016. For the thirtieth anniversary of the sports brand Volt, which was the official brand of 1986 Mexico World Cup, the designer provides a new interpretation of a soccer ball by assembling the patterns used for the different models throughout a thirty-year production history.* **Maddalena Forcella, carpet Blu Rag, hand-woven with looms from Chiapas, in co-operation with Federico Chavez/Teotitlán del Valle, Oaxaca (Photo by Takashi Fukuda). The century-long Mexican textile production is updated with a view to meeting the requirements of contemporary homes. As a result, carpets come in customizable sizes, based on modules and manufacturing processes that reflect the craft traditions of Chiapas and Oaxaca.******

P88. A DOUBLE CODE

article Guido Musante

A NEW EXPRESSIVE IDENTITY OF MEXICAN DESIGN STEMS FROM COMPARISON WITH THE ENERGIES OF MANY OTHER LOCAL ARTISAN CULTURES. THE RESEARCH PROJECT (AND THE MOVEMENT) UNDER THE DIRECTION OF STUDIO TRIBUTO IS BASED ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF A DOUBLE LINGUISTIC CODE ROOTED IN THE UPSETTING MILESTONE OF THE SPANISH CONQUEST

“In Mexico there is a sort of double code with reference to design and the relationship between design and craftsmanship. This can be traced back to the co-existence of pre-Hispanic and post-Conquest languages”. This is Laura Noriega speaking, a Mexican designer, founder of Studio Tributo, together with her sister Gabriela, manager. Working on a double expressive theme with all its facets, Tributo is at the heart of a large research movement and a project that goes beyond the borders between design and craftsmanship and that involves some of the most dynamic Mexican studios such as David Pompa, Onora, Diario Shop, Aurea, Bi Yuu, Oax-i-fornia. But let’s proceed with order. This story started back in 2007 in Milan, where Laura attended a master class in interior architecture at the Polytechnic School. When she returned to her country, she got in touch with a new Mexico, partly unknown, in which a lot of traditions of manual work were getting lost. In order to re-establish a relationship with that world, she contacted other designers and started to organize visits to a few artisan workshops to gain more knowledge about them. These initiatives were also