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LAND OF SYMPHONY – AN ITALIAN DESIGN STORY

Design. Fashion. Cinema. Innovation. From the Marche region to the world

Land of Symphony is a travelling cultural and educational format that showcases Italian creative excellence through four pillars: cinema, design, scenography and artificial intelligence.

The project has its origins in the Marche region — a cradle of artistic and craftsmanship tradition — and unfolds through a series of experiential events, lectures and presentations designed for an international audience of students, educators and creative professionals.

Its mission is to position the Marche region as a leading hub for a new approach to design and creative education based on tradition, innovation and practical production.

◆ Day 1, February 6, Friday

“The Future of Cinema Between New Languages, Digital Technologies, and AI”

10:30 – 12:30

1st floor, Rectorate of the University of Arts, Auditorium, Kosančićev venac 29

- Speakers: Paolo Doppieri (film director) & Jelena Sopić (scenographer and associate professor at the Faculty of Applied Arts)
- Project introduction: Sergio Ramazzotti (writer & photographer)
- Screening: Sakura サクラ — Land of Symphony (short film, 20 min)
- Q&A

The short film *Sakura* was born from an extraordinary collaboration with Poliarte: faculty and students from the Cinema & New Media program took part in the entire production process, from concept development to screenwriting, shooting, and post-production. For the students, it was both a learning experience and an opportunity to reflect on the future of the audiovisual world: today, the boundaries between film, series, music videos, and advertising are increasingly blurred, and cinema itself is transforming as different languages hybridize and influence one another.

Cinema is undergoing a profound shift. Until recently, cinematic language found space almost exclusively in movie theaters and, occasionally, in television projects. Today, however, cinematic elements are found in TV series, documentaries, music videos, and commercials — different formats that blend together, making the borders of storytelling increasingly fluid. At the same time, digital technologies permeate the creative workflow: from shooting to post-production, the materiality of images is becoming more pliable, and the use of digital actors or computer-generated environments is opening up new creative horizons.

Within this evolution, artificial intelligence represents an additional frontier, capable of expanding narrative and visual possibilities. AI now enters writing, production, and post-production, generating settings, faces, and dialogue — while also raising crucial ethical questions: Who is the author of an AI-assisted film? And what future awaits image professionals and performers? On one hand, these innovations make filmmaking more accessible and dynamic; on the other, they challenge us to preserve the human sensitivity that has always defined storytelling.

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The issue of AI is also inseparable from sustainability, one of the themes explored in *Sakura*. AI is energy-intensive and environmentally demanding: the ECB estimates that a single generative tool response consumes around ten times more energy than a standard Google search. According to the Öko-Institute, AI data centers also consume more than twice as much water as traditional ones. In other words, a human mind uses far less energy than a machine processing vast computational tasks. This is one of the reasons we chose to shoot *Sakura* in live action.

If cinema has changed so dramatically, should training change as well? Poliarte — part of the leading audiovisual production group in Europe — continuously updates its programs to reflect the state of the art and emerging formats. Yet the question of what truly defines quality in audiovisual production remains open. In a period of rapid transformation, in which new languages, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence captivate audiences, it is essential to reflect on the values and ethics of contemporary production.

One of the key concepts at the heart of *Sakura* is *balance*, understood as an alternative to the widespread disequilibrium and the growing geopolitical instability that characterize today's world. These conditions resonate strongly with younger generations and relate to themes they feel deeply: the aspiration to work/life balance, the equilibrium between personal and professional growth, and the need to harmonize productivity and progress with environmental preservation.

The Marche region embodies all these qualities. It is a territory where a nearly innate instinct for sustainability and landscape protection creates a pervasive sense of harmony. This environment fosters in those who live there — whether permanently or temporarily — a natural inner balance. And that inner balance, in turn, becomes the ideal foundation for stimulating creativity and inspiring artistic expression across all fields.

Lunch Break 13:00 – 14:00

(1st floor, Rectorate of the University of Arts)

“Design as a Cultural Resource to Protect and Promote” Talk: Italian Design and the Legacy of Marche Design

14:00 – 16:00

1st floor, Rectorate of the University of Arts, Auditorium, Kosančićev venac 29

- Speakers: Michele Capuani (CEO and director of Poliarte) & Marija Đorđević (senior research associate at The Faculty of Philosophy)
- Presentation: Federica Facchini, (professor of Design History at the Academy of Fine Arts in Urbino and member of the MADE Museum scientific committee)

Italian design is far more than an aesthetic style — it is a way of thinking, designing, and living, born from the encounter between craftsmanship, industry, and culture. Since the postwar period, as Italy rebuilt its economy and identity, design has transformed everyday objects into universal icons of

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beauty and functionality. Brands like Olivetti, Cassina, Fiat, Alessi, Artemide, and Pirelli, along with designers such as Ettore Sottsass, Achille Castiglioni, Vico Magistretti, Gio Ponti, and Marco Zanuso, have created a unique language combining creativity, ingenuity, and precision.

At the heart of this lies the culture of **craftsmanship** — a constant dialogue between art and production. Every object reflects collaboration among artisans, technicians, and designers, united by attention to detail and human-centered values. From this synthesis between beauty and function, thought and manual skill, arises the enduring power of Italian design.

Today, in the age of globalization and mass production, this legacy is renewed through **sustainability**, **digital fabrication**, and **emotional design**, where value lies in creating experiences and connections. Young studios reinterpret the great masters of the 20th century with fresh languages, while historic companies continue to safeguard and transmit artisanal know-how — a distinctive mark of “Made in Italy.”

Among the territories that best embody this tradition stands the **Marche region**, a land that harmonizes craftsmanship and entrepreneurship. Known as the “land of a hundred theaters and a thousand trades,” the Marche has built its identity on manual skill, quality, and creativity. From its rural roots — guided by the principle of minimum effort and maximum yield, an early form of ergonomic thinking — emerged a project culture that evolved without losing its essence.

Today the region hosts world-renowned industrial districts: footwear (Fermo, Macerata), furniture and kitchens (Pesaro), boating, leather goods (Tolentino), household appliances and paper (Fabriano), and musical instruments (Castelfidardo). These sectors exemplify how tradition and innovation can coexist, creating both cultural and economic value.

To preserve and promote this heritage, the **MADE Museum** was established — a virtual institution dedicated to Marche design. Unlike the Compasso d’Oro, which rewards national excellence, MADE offers a comprehensive view of the region’s design history, highlighting the dialogue between craft and industry and embracing creativity in all its forms — from consumer goods to fashion, graphic design, and audiovisual productions.

MADE’s mission is to make this immense material and immaterial heritage accessible to everyone, to select the most significant past and present projects, and to promote initiatives supporting local professionals and companies. Its categories range from domestic and professional furniture to mobility, entertainment, communication, and wellness technologies.

Marche design, with its ability to merge craftsmanship and innovation, fully represents the spirit of Italian design — a balance between memory and modernity, between the culture of making and aesthetic vision. It reminds us that true modernity is born from respect for tradition, the value of materials, and the love for beauty that comes from work itself.



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◆ Day 2, February 7, Saturday

Talk: Immersive Scenography and Videomapping

10:30 – 12:30

1st floor, Rectorate of the University of Arts, Auditorium, Kosančićev venac 29

- Speakers: Jesús S. Baptista (video and visual artist) & Milica Đurov (scenographer and associate professor at the Faculty of Applied Arts)
- Screening: *Digital Aida* (documentary, 20 min)
- Presentation: Michele Falasconi (3D – VFX Artist)

In recent years, scenography has gone beyond the stage and the screen to become a fully immersive experience, capable of engaging audiences on a sensory level. Thanks to visual technologies such as videomapping, the stage becomes a living, dynamic, and interactive surface where light and image redefine space perception.

Videomapping allows projections to adapt to the shape and structure of real surfaces — buildings, objects, or theatrical sets — transforming reality into a canvas: moving walls, animated sculptures, evolving backdrops. The result is a fusion of physical and digital space, evoking emotion and wonder.

Immersive scenography stems from this intersection of visual arts, theater, and multimedia. It no longer serves as a mere backdrop but becomes an integral part of the narrative. Exhibitions like Japan's TeamLab installations or Culturespaces' projects at Atelier des Lumières (Paris) and Fabrique des Lumières (Amsterdam) exemplify this sensory reinvention of visual art.

The evolution of 3D projection, motion sensors, and augmented reality has enabled the creation of fully transformable environments. In film post-production, these techniques are used to pre-visualize virtual sets or integrate real actors into digital worlds. The boundary between stage and screen is fading.

The challenge now is to unite technology and poetic vision: to ensure spectacle does not overshadow meaning. Immersive scenography and videomapping are not merely technical tools, but new visual languages — turning space into narrative experience.

Poliarte has been developing a methodology to apply this discipline across various contexts where people gather for live performance. A key milestone was the realization of digital scenography for *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi — an ambitious project staged in the ancient Greek theaters of Taormina, Siracusa, and Tindari, combining traditional set design with advanced projection technologies. A documentary recounting this creative journey will be presented during the session.

Lunch Break 13:00 – 14:00

(1st floor, Rectorate of the University of Arts)



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“AI & Creativity”

Talk: The Impact of AI on Creative Processes

14:00 – 15:00

Speakers: Federica Ramazzotti (UX designer and professor)

Live demo: AI Tutor developed by Poliarte

Over the past three years, Artificial Intelligence has become an increasingly pervasive presence in artistic, design, and communication practices — raising new questions about what “creation” means in the digital age. If AI can now generate images, sounds, and texts from human prompts, what will be the role of artists and designers in the years to come? Perhaps creativity should be seen as an ongoing dialogue between the human mind and the machine.

This new (and sometimes forced) collaboration opens up enormous opportunities — beyond the fear of automation. AI can enhance creative flow, accelerate benchmarking and sketching, and process complex ideas quickly, even for those without advanced technical skills. In architecture, music, and film, this is already happening: generative models visualize ideas in real time, fostering more fluid and collaborative workflows.

Yet challenges remain: content ethics, copyright protection, and the overall quality of what is generated. These nuances must ensure that technology adds value — not homogenization — to creative production.

In design education, especially within the framework of *Industry 4.0*, AI integration is particularly complex. It affects not only image generation but the entire production chain of creative ideas that become products or services.

In this context, Poliarte is developing innovative educational models. One example is **MOIRA (Mentorship Oracle for Iterative Reflective Assistance)**, a virtual assistant designed to support students throughout their learning process. Contextualized for specific courses, MOIRA provides both synchronous and asynchronous guidance through theoretical or practical activities. Instead of offering direct answers, it leads students step by step toward their learning goals. MOIRA is also **inclusive**, featuring activities that support students with learning differences (DSA). Based on the *Triological Learning Approach* (Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2005), it helps build an active learning community in which students and teachers contribute to refining the model and enhancing its understanding of creative problem-solving.

Workshop Moira

15:00 – 17:00 Federica Ramazzotti & Mauro Salvador (only for registered participants)

Kosančićev venac 29, groundfloor, classroom 24

The workshop is structured around a short game design cycle supported by Moira, an artificial intelligence agent developed by Poliarte that acts as a mentor throughout the creative process. Rather than providing solutions, Moira guides participants by asking the right questions, encouraging reflection and design awareness. During the workshop, participants will create simple game concepts and present them in structured pitches.



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