ICONIC LANDSCAPE

Italian designer Paola Lenti is a master colourist, crafting bold furniture and floor coverings out of traditional yarns and high-tech textiles. She conceives her pieces as landscapes, destined for both indoor and outdoor use. This year in Milan, Paola shaped a new landscape, presenting recently developed pieces alongside iconic and re-editioned designs.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DEDECE

WORDS Holly Beadle

A veteran of the fair, the designer was on the lookout for a new space – somewhere integrated into the urban fabric, open to the city and surrounded by greenery. “I wanted a lively place that made people feel good,” she says, adding, “and was a positive oasis for Milan.” This led the designer to a former industrial building just outside the city centre. In an abandoned state, the space reflects the tension between past and present – something that Paola has become increasingly fascinated with since launching her brand in 1994. She considers this year, 2023, to be a fork in the road, where as a designer, one can either choose to respectfully reinterpret the past or maintain a strong creative impulse towards the future. In pursuit of the latter, she consistently looks for sustainable ways to manufacture her pieces, particularly for outdoor spaces.

This year, Paola Lenti celebrated 25 years of collaboration with Francesco Rota, the Milanese designer with whom the brand released their first indoor seating pieces in 1998. Over the years, the collaboration has given life to pieces that are highly recognisable – pieces like the iconic *Linea* and *Wave* chaise lounges, designed for indoor and outdoor use, respectively. On her long-standing partnership and friendship with Francesco, Paola says, “We both take a similar approach to creativity and quality. We follow our intuitions, not the trends.”

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