



The Luxury Network Newsletter

Luxury & the Manipulation of Desire: Historical Perspectives for Contemporary Debates

January 2014 Issue 3

THE SECOND NETWORK WORKSHOP

The second Workshop of the Luxury Network, held at the University of Bologna, Italy, from 12-14 December 2013, explored the theme **'The Regulation of Luxury: Morality, the State and the Law.'** The Workshop, organised by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli and Elisa Tosi Brandi of the University of Bologna began with a session considering some of the approaches which states and legal systems have taken to regulating luxury from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, from sumptuary laws to royal manufactures, while the rest of the event focused on the contemporary control of luxury and debates surrounding its cultural, social and economic role.

Speakers included legal experts, industry representatives involved in the protection and promotion of Italian luxury brands and from companies including Riva yachts and Furla bags, and even an officer from the Guardia di Finanza, the Italian law enforcement agency that deals with customs, fake goods and smuggling.



KEY PARTNERS

Giorgio Riello (University of Warwick)

Rosa Salzberg
(University of Warwick)

Glenn Adamson (Museum of Art and Design, New York)

Marta Ajmar (Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli (University of Bologna)

Peter McNeil
(University of Stockholm & UTS Sydney)

Catherine Kovesi
(University of Melbourne)



The Leverhulme Trust

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

Recurrent themes included the production and marketing of luxury for emerging markets, the possibility of sustainable luxury, the growth of luxury consumption in a period of economic crisis, and the particular importance of 'Made in Italy' luxury design and production to the Italian economy. Striking, too, was the importance of history to many contemporary luxury brands, who often stress their traditional values and artisanal heritage as they attempt to cultivate and protect a particular 'aura' of value and desirability.

Luxury Day

The Bologna Workshop concluded with a day open to the public, held in a magnificent frescoed room at San Giovanni a Monte, which began with the presentation of a short film, *Luxury in Motion*, by the Italian filmmaker Enza Negroni. The film explored many of the issues associated with contemporary luxury and will soon be made available on the Luxury Network website. This was followed by interviews with Concetta Lanciaux of Lux Advisory, the businesswoman who was instrumental in creating the Luxury conglomerate LVMH, with Arrigo Cipriani, the 'Harry' behind Venice's famed Harry's Bar and the Cipriani restaurants, and with the theologian Marcello Mattè, who discussed the ethical implications of luxury, past and present.



Luxury and Shoes

While in Bologna, members of the Luxury Network were able to visit Baldanini Shoe Manufacturers, a renowned Italian luxury brand and a family company that goes back three generations. Shown around the company's factory in San Mauro Pascoli, near Rimini, we were able to observe the process of production from the design and modelling of individual shoes, to the selection of expensive materials (including printed and laser-cut leathers, python and fur, and individually branded zips and buckles), and to follow the process around the factory floor as each product was created, finished and boxed by workers who handle several hundred pairs of expensive shoes every day. We were also given a glimpse of how marketing and retail strategies are developed, as the company moves into newer markets such as Russia and the Middle East. Baldanini also opened up its shoe archive for us, displaying one hundred shoes that span the last forty years of the company's history, and allowing us to reflect on the interplay of design, fashion, materials, emotions (but perhaps not comfort?) that contribute to creating a pair of luxury shoes.





UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop 3: The Geography of Luxury: East, West and Global Directions

Global History and Culture Centre and Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, 7-9 May 2014

Final Workshop: Luxury and the Manipulation of Desire

Villa I Tatti and European University Institute, Florence, 25-26 September 2014

Forthcoming: The Luxury Network is developing in collaboration with the University of Warwick's Knowledge Centre a new Luxury Page with interviews, podcasts and many other materials. All of this and more coming soon!

The Leverhulme International Network Luxury & the Manipulation of Desire was initiated in 2013 and aims to connect the long history of luxury with the importance that luxury has assumed in contemporary society. It does so by fostering dialogue between academics and curators based in partner institutions and experts, journalists and business people working in the luxury sector internationally. The Network is part of the research activities of the Global History and Culture Centre at Warwick University.

**Global History
& Culture Centre**
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK



Find out more www.warwick.ac.uk/go/luxury



Follow us @WarwickLuxury



Email us luxury@warwick.ac.uk