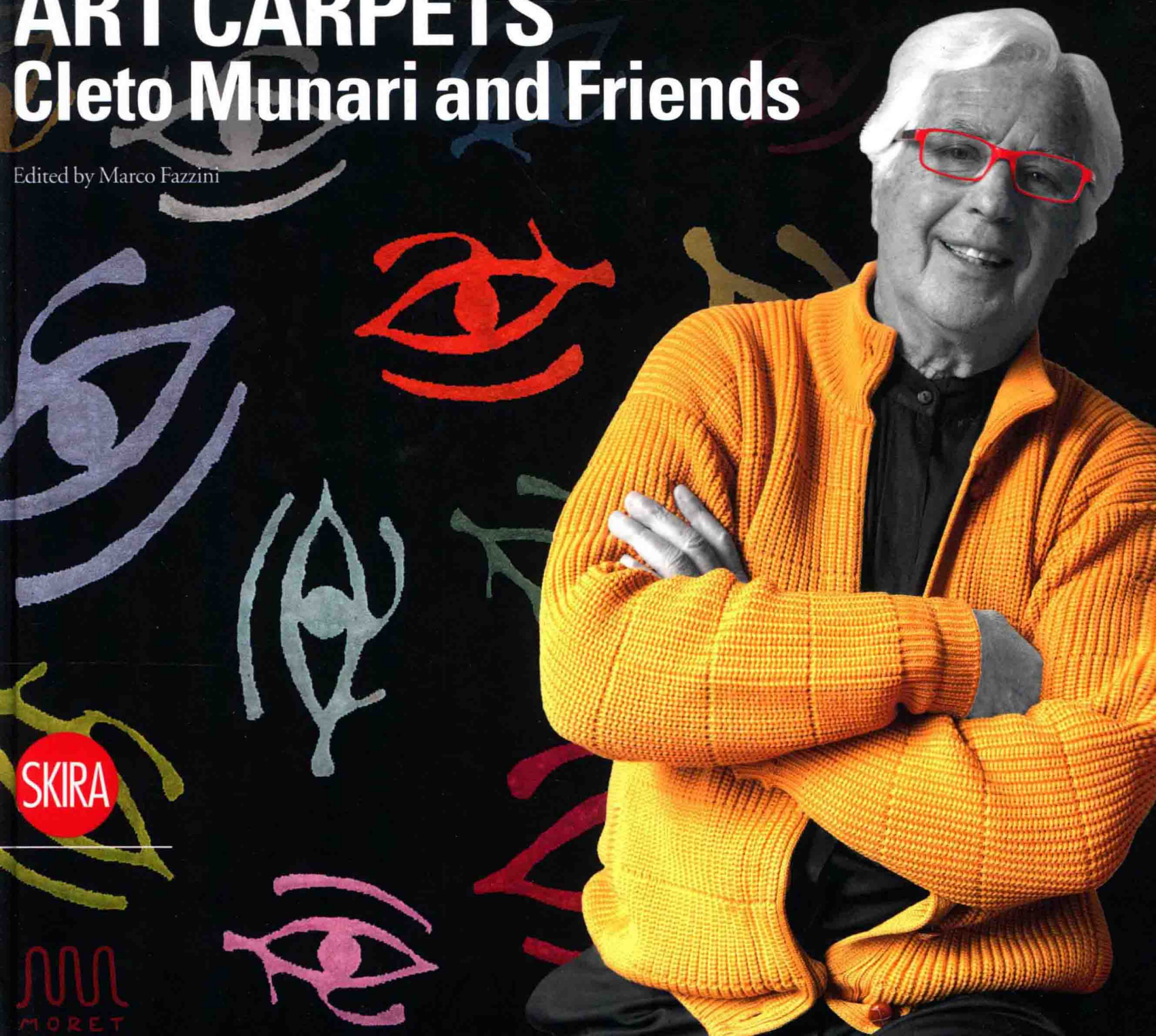




ART CARPETS

Cleto Munari and Friends

Edited by Marco Fazzini



SKIRA

MORET

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Lawrence Ferlinghetti

Dario Fo

Alessandro Mendini

Ettore Mocchetti

Mario Botta

Sandro Chia

Mimmo Paladino

Javier Mariscal

Deisa Centazzo



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Cleto Munari's Chronology

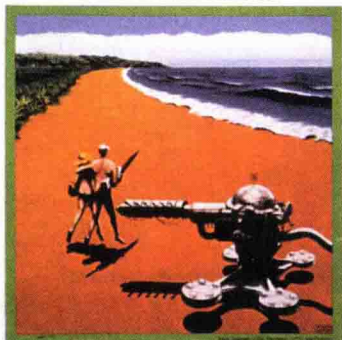
Marco Fazzini and Stanley Moss



1970s

MODO

mensile di informazione sul design



- Design dove vai: in che modo nasce MODO
- Il Totem, un'utilitaria in cantina per farsi l'energia da soli
- Progettazione e colonialismo
- Il mercato del mobile in Italia: forse qualcuno è già di troppo
- Speciale sull'Associazione Disegno Industriale

rd.

In 1972, by a chance encounter, **Carlo Scarpa**—already a famous architect at the time—welcomed Cleto Munari in his home in Vicenza. From then onwards, Munari spent each day with the master, in order to see him work, meet his acquaintances, and develop his creations. This friendship and esteem lasted until the passing of the great master, who designed what have become legendary items for Munari: his cutlery, carafe, and centrepieces.

Marco Zanuso was one of the great Italian architects Munari had been in touch with since the early 1970s. This group also included Vico Magistretti, Gio Ponti, Mario Bellini and Ettore Sottsass—friends and life-long collaborators who made their presence felt almost on a daily basis.

Alessandro Mendini,
MODO magazine
(1977–2006)

Born in Austria in 1917, **Ettore Sottsass** graduated from the Polytechnic of Turin in 1939 and started working for Olivetti in 1958. One of Scarpa's long-standing friends, he met Cleto Munari at the dawn of the 1970s. Munari shared with him the experience of Memphis and then, for several years, that of the Sottsass Associati studio. He designed hundreds of objects for Munari: tea and coffee sets, jewels, vases, glass items, watches, pieces of furniture, and lamps.

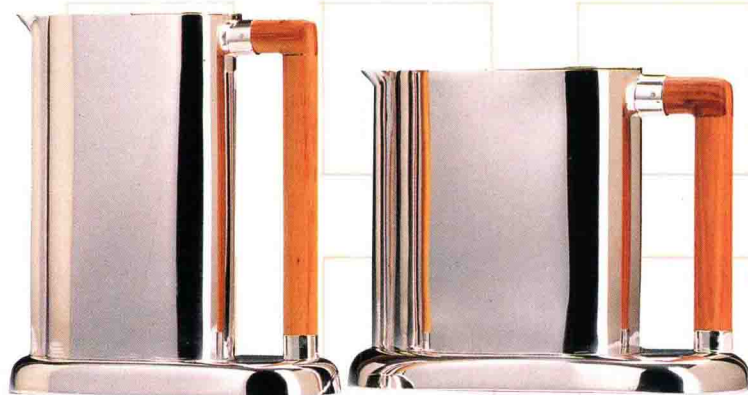
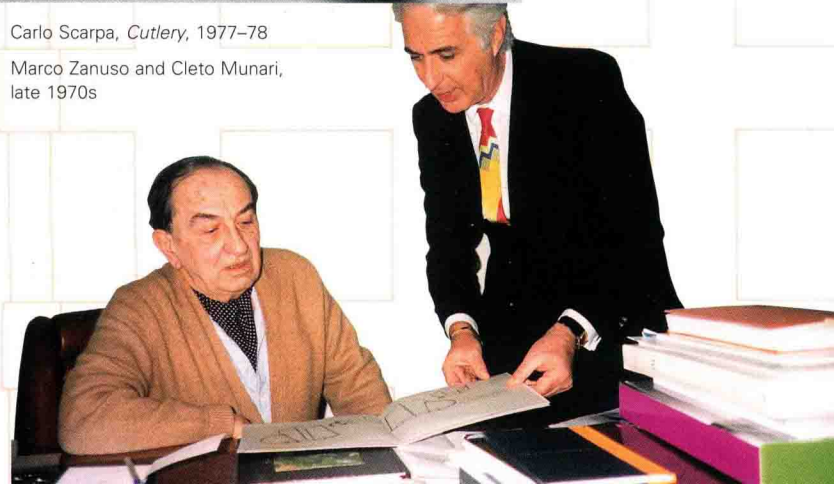
In 1977, on the eve of the launching of the magazine *MODO*, Cleto Munari met its founder **Alessandro Mendini**, supporting the latter's enterprise with ten subscriptions. This marked the beginning of a friendship between the two destined to last for forty years.

It was Ettore Sottsass and Carlo Scarpa who advised Munari to go and visit the brilliant young creative **Hans Hollein**. A formidable globetrotter, Munari set out for Vienna in order to meet the architect in 1977. The two were later to design glasses, trays, centrepieces and watches that are now on display in museums around the world.

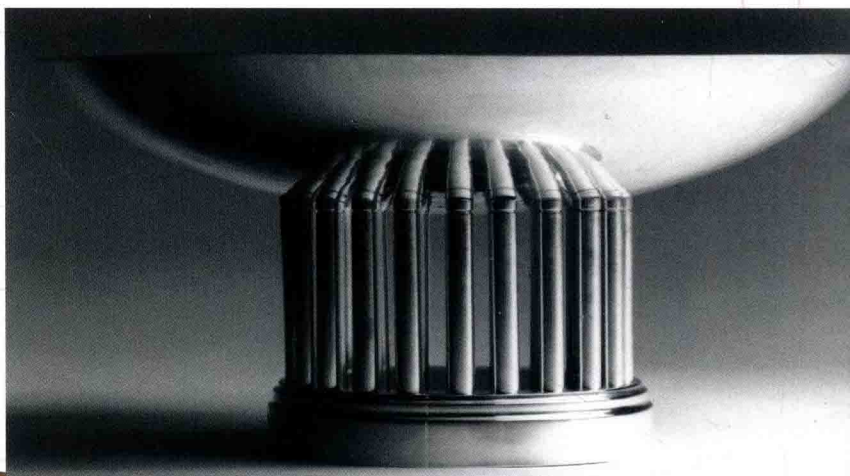


Carlo Scarpa, *Cutlery*, 1977–78

Marco Zanuso and Cleto Munari, late 1970s



Ettore Sottsass, *Tea and coffee set* in silver and pink wood, 1971–81



Hans Hollein, *Silver fruit bowl*, 1979

Ettore Sottsass, *Design for a tray*, 1979

1980s

The design and décor of Munari's house in Venice, originally conceived for Carlo Scarpa, were laid out starting in 1979. Following the death of the master, **Ettore Sottsass** was entrusted with the work, creating a space that was featured in hundreds of magazines from around the world throughout the 1980s.

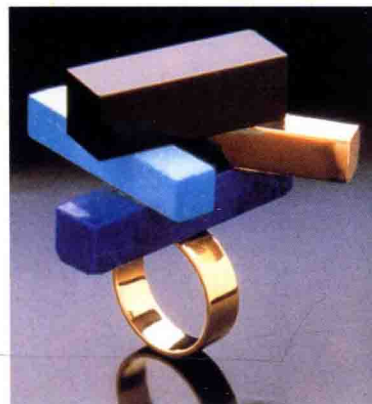
A young talent supported by Carlo Scarpa and Giuseppe Mazzariol, **Mario Botta** graduated in Architecture in Venice and then became acquainted with Cleto Munari (among others). The friendship and collaboration between the two produced dozens of ideas, objects and designs in various fields of applied art.

Norman Foster, along with Cleto Munari, holds the record of having designed over fifty objects in the mid-1980s that were never completed. The two met in Hong Kong and developed strong ties of friendship and collaboration. While highly significant, his designs attest to the fact that the transition from the planning stage to that of the crafting or industrial manufacturing of an item is not always a straightforward one.

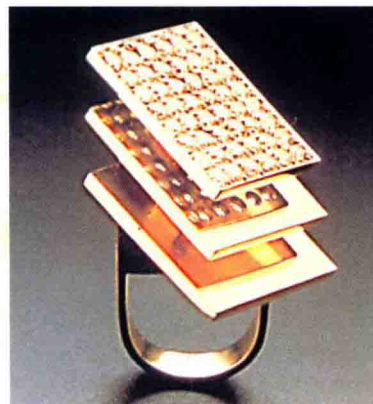
Over time, **Paolo Portoghesi** designed various objects with Cleto Munari. Portoghesi praised the young Munari's talent right from the start. In what has become a famous passage, he wrote: "Munari... cuts across the culture of architects and designers, enriching it with one of the rare opportunities to verify its results, leaving behind him small wonders that one day historians will be studying as significant early syntheses of broader phenomena."



Cleto Munari with Ettore Sottsass and Arata Isozaki, Venice (Cleto Munari's apartment)



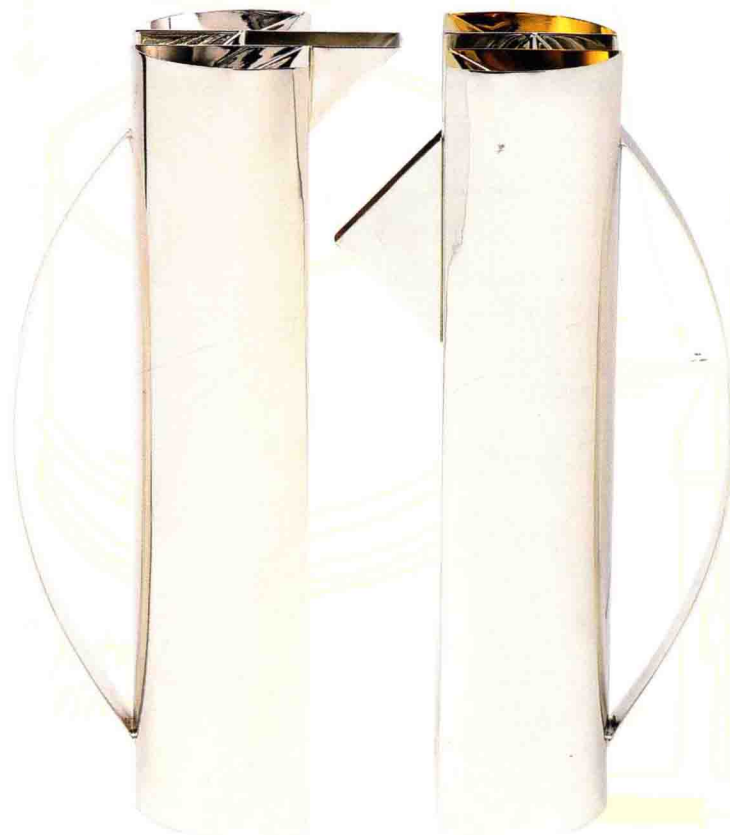
Ettore Sottsass, *Pair of rings*, 1984–86



Paolo Portoghesi, *Silver cutlery*, 1983



The allegories featured to various degrees by **Arata Isozaki's** creations, with references to Palladio and Claude Nicolas Ledoux, have clearly attracted Cleto Munari's interest. The two met in the late 1970s and worked together for several years, spending time together with their long-standing common friends: Sottsass and Mendini. It was Isozaki who organized the grand exhibition at the Tokyo Seibu Museum for Munari in 1988.



Mario Botta, *Pair of silver carafes*, 1987

Norman Foster, *Preliminary drawings for various objects*, 1984–86

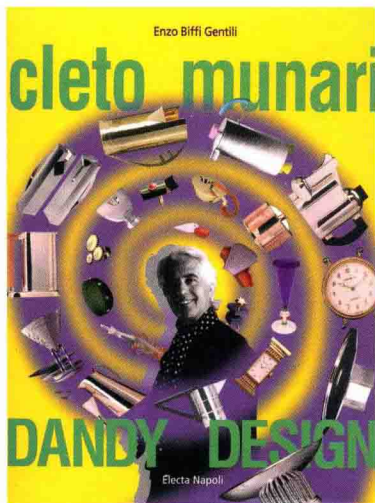
1990s

The key exhibitions in Munari's career include at least two Italian ones worth mentioning as crucial stages for him at the height of his career and fame. One is the 1997 exhibition "**Dandy Design**," held at the old stables of Palazzo Reale in Naples under the patronage of the Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Heritage; the other the 1999 exhibition "**La figura delle cose**," a new retrospective curated by Achille Bonito Oliva that was held in the Museo Nazionale di Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome.

Munari first met **Václav Havel** at the exhibition Hans Hollein had organized for him at the Österreichische Galerie Belvedere in Vienna in 1986. Havel devoted an exhibition to Munari in 1993, which he personally inaugurated, entrusting the designer Borek Šípek with its curatorship. Bill Clinton visited the exhibition the day after its inauguration.

A promising young architect in Milan at the time, in 1971–72 **Michele De Lucchi** was introduced to Munari and designed various objects for him, including a series of captivating and highly refined glass items that have entered into the history of Murano glass.

Munari has always been fascinated with the East. Among others, his collaborators and friends include: Tao Ho, Arata Isozaki, Toyo Ito, Masahiko Kubo, Kisho Kurokawa, Shigeru Uchida, Nanae Umeda and Yoichi Ohira.



Cover of the *Dandy Design* catalogue, 1997

Based on an idea by Cleto Munari, the body of the **Porsche 911 Carrera** was completely redesigned by Alessandro Mendini (left side), Cleto Munari (bumper and rear bonnet), Mimmo Paladino (front bonnet), Cesar Pelli (hood) and Ettore Sottsass (right side).

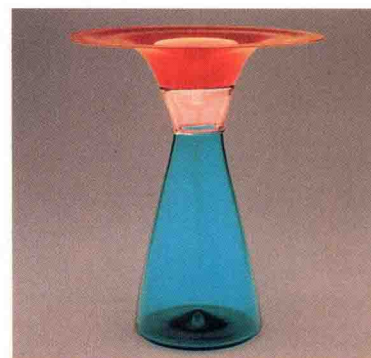
In 1999 top-design lighting systems were created under Munari's supervision by various architects for **Ilva Pali Dalmine**. These systems are now in use in various urban centres, both in Italy and abroad.



Václav Havel, the President of the newly founded Czech Republic



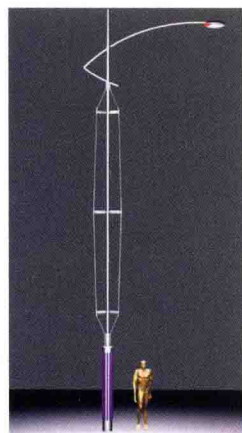
Cleto Munari, *Porsche redesigned by Munari* (with Mendini, Paladino, Pelli and Sottsass)



Yoichi Ohira, *Blown glass*, 1990



Tao Ho, *Silver carafe and glasses, "Lazy Lucy"*, 1993



Lighting systems for Ilva Pali Dalmine, 1999



Michele De Lucchi, *Design and blown glass*, 1990

2000s

A new jewel collection by **Ettore Sottsass** was launched in 2002 under the name "La Seduzione." This chiefly consists of gold objects with ebony, coral, lapis lazuli and black onyx inlays and finishes: rings, necklaces and earrings that illustrate the simplicity and charm of the great master, for whom "design—to quote Alessandro Mendini—is not a matter of ideology, of orthodoxy, but a sensitive phenomenon, a quest for identity."

In 2003, Cleto Munari fulfilled a dream of his: to launch a collection of glass objects, the "**Corolle d'Autore**" collection, a unique series of designer wine glasses. These were crafted in Murano according to the ideas of seventy designers, including: Andrea Branzi, Riccardo Dalisi, Ross Lovegrove, Richard Meier, David Palterer, Paolo Portoghesi, Álvaro Siza, Stanley Tigerman, Oscar Tusquets Blanca, Tao Ho, Ettore Sottsass, and Izzika Gaon.



Mimmo Paladino, *Two Jewels*, 1983-2003

Sandro Chia, *Lacquered wood kneading trough*, 2008



Ettore Sottsass, *Drawings for jewels from the "La Seduzione" collection*, 2002

After installing a work by **Mimmo Paladino** in his own house in Venice in the early 1980s, and then starting a jewel project with him, in 2003 Munari finally witnessed the creation of a wonderful and precious collection—one of the achievements he is most proud of.

With **Alessandro Mendini**, in 2003 Cleto Munari developed the "MicroMacro" collection: a series of Murano glass vases set within metal casings in such a way that the bulges created by the constricting solid material form unexpected recesses, curves, folds and bubbles. What we seem to find here is an attempt to "foster a circular, relaxed and informal anthropological motion of life," as Mendini had already theorized in a 1985 text entitled *Le affinità elettive*.

In 2003 a prestigious book was published recording Cleto Munari's new creations: **The Book of the Five Pens** illustrates a previously unreleased collection of fountain pens devoted to five Nobel Prize laureates in Literature: Wole Soyinka, José Saramago, Saul Bellow, Nagib Mahfuz, and Toni Morrison. Aside from dedicatory letters from the Nobel winners, the book features the original designs from the creators of the pens: Toyo Ito, Alessandro Mendini, Cleto Munari, Álvaro Siza Vieira, and Oscar Tusquets Blanca.



"**I Magnifici 7**" is the name of the new table collection signed by Cleto Munari, Mimmo Paladino, Sandro Chia, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Mark Strand, Mario Botta, and Alessandro Mendini.

After years of on-and-off collaboration, in the new century **Sandro Chia** has designed various pieces of furniture for Munari: first a table, then a chair, a drink cabinet, a mirror and a kneading trough. A very close collaboration between the two continues to this day, unflinchingly producing original ideas and designs—as is always the case between Munari and his long-standing friends: Mimmo Paladino, Mario Botta, Alessandro Mendini and the others behind this new carpet collection.

Alessandro Mendini, *"MicroMacro" collection*, 2003

Cover of the catalogue *Architetture di Vetro: corolle d'autore*, 2003

