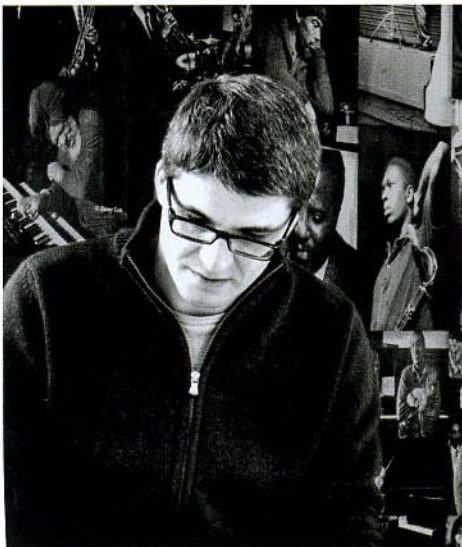




all that jazz

Beginning his adult life as an advertising executive, designer Ruggerio Magrini never knew where his love of jazz and design would take him



Inspiration can often come from many things — love, hate, passion or simply by the everyday things around us. In the case of furniture designer Ruggerio Magrini, passion comes from his culture and his love of jazz.

Ruggerio started out as an advertising executive in Italy. "I was introduced to design when working at an advertising agency specialising in furniture. A client asked me to draw some pieces for them and it was very basic in the beginning, but step by step I understood the whole process of furniture making — from idea to the drawing and technology involved. One day I woke up and decided that I should give this a shot and we started with Kristalia."

Kristalia began in 1994 and has since grown to be one of Italy's most recognised contemporary furniture companies. According to Ruggerio, "I am interested in all that is contemporary. Design for me is an experience, what I see in life,

because I think design in Italy is mirrored in the culture of the people."

Ruggerio is very much inspired by and has a passion for music, in particular jazz. The once-upon-a-time drummer says "Jazz started with improvisation and it is the perfect reflection of the people who play it. It is a type of music that evolved very fast and it was a way of expressing emotion. Design has also evolved very fast over the last century. Jazz and design have the same development and they are both embodiments of the people they are made for. People express their feelings through jazz, I express mine through design."

Kristalia is a company that not only represents aesthetics, but also form and function. "For me, one of the main ingredients in design is research. Which kind of material is going to be good to make a piece of furniture? I look for the technical wearing and 1000 other different parts that will



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make up the piece.” In the beginning, he tells us, there was a big producer of technical materials such as fabrics and plastic fibres very close to Kristalia. Ruggerio and his team went into the factory to discuss how to use the technology for their furniture and they started producing upholstery that was in the same fashion that this factory was using for shoes and clothing. It was easy to clean and durable, while looking great at the same time.

The company is very concerned with making the pieces technologically viable and functional, with years and hundreds of thousands of dollars going in to just the first prototype. It is this passion for making each work as functional as it is beautiful which makes Kristalia stand out. “The shape of each piece is important, the furniture is timeless, very contemporary and minimal, but the junction between shape and technology is very important. Sometimes we start with the technology and conclude with the shape.”

When asked about a favourite piece, Ruggerio described two for very different reasons. First the Fifty, which is an extendable table that’s top is only 50 millimetres in height. “It (the Fifty) represents all of Kristalia’s knowledge because we designed the table with all our experience. All that we know we put in this table.” It takes a massive 231 components to make, yet is sleek, with all parts sitting flush and smooth as if it is made from one piece. And for pure design aesthetic? “The Bikappa chair. It’s very simple but the technology is very complicated.” The design can really translate to any situation and it comes in three classic colours of red, black and white. Kristalia also designed this in conjunction



with Studio Bartoli Design, which was a thrill for Ruggerio and the company.

One of the questions we always ask is who our favourite designers look up to. In Ruggerio’s case, one person stands out: Achille Castiglioni. Castiglioni was an industrial designer who designed iconic pieces out of everyday items such as The Mezzadro, which was created using a tractor seat. “He had great capacity to make pieces of furniture that stood out in technology

and culture.” Ruggerio describes his idol as “immortal — he created a path and a lot of people have followed it”. Sitting back to reflect on this we wonder who the next generation of iconic designers will be — perhaps it will even include Ruggerio. **CHD**

For more information on the Kristalia collection visit www.kristalia.it or Australian stockist, Fanuli Furniture, at www.fanuli.com