

Cassina

Mario Bellini tours China

A Passion Called 'Project': an authentic account where design meets architecture

December 2015: After his first visit in 2014, the Italian architect **Mario Bellini returns to China with Cassina and debuts in Beijing and Chengdu** to speak about his longstanding relationship with the brand and the international projects which have made him one of the most influential architects of our time.

Following a presentation to design enthusiasts and industry insiders at the Cassina monobrand store at the North Easy Home Furniture Mall in Beijing on the 16th of December 2015, Bellini will continue to Chengdu where he will host a special evening at the newly opened Upper Gallery restaurant on the 18th of December 2015.

The Upper Gallery has been exclusively furnished by Cassina with iconic pieces such as the *Veliero* bookshelf by Franco Albini, the *Ventaglio* table by Charlotte Perriand, and the *Cab* chairs by Mario Bellini.

More than 500,000 iconic Cab chairs produced to date, a legend in design history

One of Bellini's most recognizable pieces, and a Cassina best-seller with over 500,000 produced to date, is the *Cab* chair designed in 1977. The *Cab* is conceived as an extension of the human body and through this harmonious relationship the chair is - according to Bellini - one of the pieces of furniture most deeply rooted in our collective memory.

Cassina's **craftsmanship expertise is evidenced in the workmanship of the saddle leather** which fits like a glove over the chair's metal skeleton, and is defined with a zip that runs around the profile of its legs. The structural and organic design of this piece has withstood the test of time and continues to be the subject of many imitations.

The *Cab* chair has been reintroduced this year in an extended palette of colours (16 in total) making the collection more youthful and versatile for any space.



Cab chair by Mario Bellini, Cassina I Contemporanei Collection

New additions to a modern classic, the Cab collection

This year the architect, just turned 80, has further strengthened his 50 year collaboration with Cassina in a sign of continuity. Just like the *Cab* family. Matured like a true icon, this range now extends to all areas of the home with the introduction of the *Cab Lounge* armchair and the *Cab Night* bed.

Cab Lounge: saddle leather made to measure, and live, like a tailored suit

The *Cab Lounge*, spacious and inviting, has been skilfully upholstered internally and externally in saddle leather.

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The same concept developed for the *Cab* chair has in fact been transferred to the armchair: the saddle leather dresses the steel skeleton of the frame like a bespoke suit to perfectly support the sinuous shape of the body in a relationship of structural and organic symbiosis.

The upholstery, available in five colours of saddle leather (black, brown, taupe, China red and blue), is made up of 11 different pieces of saddle leather sewn together and closed with 4 zips.

The ergonomics of the *Cab Lounge* guarantee surprising comfort also thanks to the leather cushions attached to its interior which make it even softer. Particular attention has been paid to detail, from the visible stitching to the elegant saddle leather straps which fix the head cushion to the backrest.

Cab Night, an evolution to enrich the night-time area

The *Cab Night* brings the same richness of materials and attention to detail to the bedroom. The structure and the legs of the bed are upholstered in saddle leather, just like the other members of the family, and saddlery craftsmanship details are visible in the joints between the bed's various parts.

The bed's slightly tapered and padded headboard is characterised by a stitching feature which divides the left side from the right. It is upholstered in precious leather produced with a specific tanning process which makes it even softer, so that when one rests against it strong sensations of well-being are felt. The frame is also upholstered in soft leather with a particularly complex workmanship due to the thickness of the leather used.



Cab Night and *Cab Lounge* by Mario Bellini, Cassina I Contemporanei Collection

Experimentation and innovation: a record for the most awards received in the design world

Bellini started collaborating with Cassina at a young age after a short design apprenticeship with “La Rinascente”, the prestigious Milanese department store. His first meeting with Cesare Cassina, where he proposed a table for which he had already won his first of eight Compasso d’Oro prizes, led to a strong relationship which can today be identified in a variety of innovative projects.

The experimental work carried out by Mario Bellini with Cassina in the 60’s and 70’s created some original and ground-breaking designs. **Research of new materials and structural technology** resulted in pieces like the timeless *Break* chair, conceived thanks to the application of a new type of polyurethane foam.

Mario Bellini’s passion and affinity for structural design can be particularly recognized in the tables designed for Cassina (*La Rotonda*, *La Basilica* and *Pantheon*) which further highlight the close relationship between furniture design and architecture. Made up of columns, pilasters and crossed beams, these complex masterpieces also enhance Cassina’s long heritage mastery in working with wood.

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About Mario Bellini

Mario Bellini is internationally renowned as an architect and designer. He has received the Compasso d'Oro Award eight times, and other prestigious architecture awards including the Medaglia d'oro awarded by the President of the Italian Republic for his contribution to furthering design and architecture in the world (2004) and the Ambrogino d'oro for civic merit awarded by the City of Milan (2011). He has given talks in many of the world's great cultural centers and was the editor of the magazine Domus from 1985 to 1991. He has 25 of his works in the permanent design collection of the New York Museum of Modern Art, which dedicated a personal retrospective to him in 1987. He has held countless art, design and architecture exhibitions over the years, both in Italy and abroad.

Since the 1980's, dedicating himself almost entirely to architecture, the manifold projects he has designed include the Portello Trade Fair district in Milan, the Villa Erba Exhibition Centre in Cernobbio (Como), the Tokyo Design Centre in Japan, the Natuzzi America Headquarters in the United States, the Essen Expo Centre in Germany, the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, the headquarters of the Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt, the Verona Forum complex, the City History Museum in Bologna, the Department of Islamic Art at the Louvre in Paris, and the new Milan Convention Centre, the largest in Europe. Projects currently underway include the refurbishing works on the Brera Pinacoteca in Milan, while others nearing completion include the Erzelli Science and Technology Park in Genoa and the Civic Marble's Square in Carrara. He has various projects at the design stage, which include the "New Eco-City" of Zhenjiang in China and a large Residential, Cultural and Sports Complex in Qatar.

www.bellini.it

About Cassina

Cassina, founded in 1927, launched industrial design in Italy during the 50's. The company was pioneering in the way it showed a striking inclination for research and innovation, working side by side with important architects and designers with differing backgrounds and encouraging them to envision fresh designs, a characteristic that still distinguishes the company today. Cassina's identity lies in fact in an innovative fusion that closely links technological skill with traditional craftsmanship.

In 1964 the *Cassina I Maestri Collection* began with the acquisition of the exclusive worldwide rights to produce four models designed by Le Corbusier (who was living at the time) together with Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand. Over the following years this collection has exclusively brought together some of the most iconic furniture by the great architects of modern classics working in close collaboration with the heirs and official foundations (Gerrit T. Rietveld, Charles R. Mackintosh, E. Gunnar Asplund, Frank Lloyd Wright, Charlotte Perriand, Franco Albini and Marco Zanuso).

Today many important Italian and international designers and architects collaborate for the *Cassina I Contemporanei Collection* including: Mario Bellini, Rodolfo Dordoni, Jaime Hayon, Piero Lissoni, Vico Magistretti, Luca Nichetto, Gaetano Pesce, Gio Ponti and Philippe Starck.

In 2015 the Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola was nominated Art Director of the company.

Since 2013, the *Cassina I Contemporanei Collection* hosts the historical Italian furniture design brand Simon, founded by Dino Gavina and Maria Simoncini. This meeting tells the industrial and entrepreneurial story characterised by an experimental approach and the expression of the relationship between culture and production. *Cassina SimonCollezione* brings together renowned names such as Carlo Scarpa, Marcel Breuer and Kazuhide Takahama.

www.cassina.com