



'Hand Made in Italy': an Exhibition Dedicated to the Italian Leather Handicraft

Sara Capraro (March 01, 2009)

The Exhibition 'Hand Made in Italy' is a tribute to the Tuscan leather handicraft tradition. Organized in collaboration with the Italian Trade Commission, the display was hosted at the Openhouse Gallery in Soho, Manhattan, from the 23rd to the 28th of February.

"Few, but the best in the world". This was the slogan coined for the exhibition 'Hand Made in Italy', born from a partnership between the [Italian Trade Commission](#) [1] (ICE) and the [Italian Vegetable-Tanned Leather Consortium](#) [2] (Vera Pelle).

Organized at the charming "[Openhouse Gallery](#) [3]" in Soho, New York, the display paid tribute to the Tuscan leather handicraft tradition through a variety of multi-media displays conceived by the world-known Italian photographer [Oliviero Toscani](#) [4] and [La Sterpaia, Bottega dell'Arte della Comunicazione](#) [5].

'Hand Made in Italy' featured photographs of luxury fashion items and handcrafted products such as handbags, shoes, luggage, saddles and chairs made of vegetable-tanned leather and produced by renowned Italian labels and skilled artisans.

They were all united through the Italian Vegetable-Tanned Leather Consortium, which for more than fifteen years has been promoting the old tradition of vegetable tanning throughout the world. Among the participating brands there were several famous Italian names such as [Tod's](#) [6], [Zanotta](#) [7], [B&B](#) [8], [Lamberto Bartolozzi](#) [9], Lucaldo, [Buttero](#) [10], [Folets Arte & Cuoio](#) [11], [Pariani](#) [12], [Nobuko Nishida](#) [13], [Claudio Sano](#) [14], [Sawaya & Moroni](#) [15], [Stefano Bemer](#) [16] and [The Bridge](#) [17].

During the inauguration, the President of the Italian Trade Commission Aniello Musella, the President of the Consortium Mr. Andrea Ghizzani and Oliviero Toscani welcomed the numerous guests. While sipping flutes of champagne and goblets of red and white wine, they enjoyed the live performance of talented violin and cello musicians.

All the visitors received a gift copy of the 2009 'The Lords of Leather' calendar. It portrays the authors and producers of some of the pieces displayed and photographed by Oliviero Toscani. They posed almost naked, with only leather sheets to cover them. Their skin was half covered by true pieces of handmade art.

'Hand Made in Italy' will travel worldwide; even as far as Tokyo and Seoul.

Translated by Marina Melchionda



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- [1] <http://www.ice.it/>
- [2] <http://www.verapelle.it/>
- [3] <http://www.openhousegallery.org/>
- [4] <http://www.olivierotoscanistudio.com/>
- [5] <http://www.lasterpaia.it/>
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