# Italian Textiles: Creativity and Tradition Enchant Premiére Vision NY

F. G. (July 20, 2012)

The 25th edition of Premiére Vision Preview New York, the most important trade show for textile and accessories on the East Coast, took place on July 11 and 12 in Chelsea. 30 Italian exhibitors participated in the show, and distinguished themselves for the innovative products they proposed to the American corporate buyers. “The Italian presence in this textile trade show is traditionally very much appreciated,” Italian Trade Commissioner Aniello Musella told i-Italy.

The textile trends of tomorrow were just unveiled at the 25th edition of Premiére Vision Preview [2] New York, that took place on July 11 and 12 at the Metropolitan Pavilion in the fashionable neighborhood of Chelsea.

Premiére Vision Preview New York is the most important trade show for textile and accessories on

the East Coast. Twice a year it presents American corporate buyers with the still unreleased collections of the world's best textile suppliers.

The show was visited on its opening day by Italian Trade Commissioner [3] Aniello Musella, who accompanied Consul General of Italy to New York [4] Natalia Quintavalle to meet the 30 Italian exhibitors that could participate in the event thanks to the Italian Trade Commission's support.

Italy was the most represented nation at Premiére Vision, with exhibitors from all the key productive districts of the Italian textile sector, mainly located in the areas of Biella, Como and Prato.

Jacques Brunel, General Manager of Premiére Vision Preview, told i-Italy that the participation of Italian exhibitors at the show dates way back in time, and so does the relationship between Premiére Vision and the Italian Trade Commission: "Italy and Premiére Vision are a family. We have been collaborating with the Italian Trade Commission for over 30 years, and we always feature Italian exhibitors in the show."

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This appreciation is reflected in the Italian Trade Commission's studies of the US Department of Commerce's statistics, which show that in the period January-April 2012 Italy ranked 6th among the clothing fabric suppliers of the United States, with positive trends in all the individual markets of the clothing industry except for cotton.

The individual markets analyses for the first four months of 2012 show that Italy is the US' leading supplier of wool, whose market generated $14.62 million and grew +36.37%.

Italian silk generated a total cash flow of $8.75 million and grew +1.27%. Italy is also rapidly ascending the chart of the US' performance and technical fabrics supplying countries, registering a +10.19% increment from last year's values.

Musella highlighted the fact that these statistics are actually not exactly descriptive: "many orders of Italian fabrics that are bought by American clients are then sent to be manufactured in other countries where their production plants are located. The value of these orders is not computed in the statistics, that therefore present much inferior figures than the actual ones."

Elaborating on the superior quality of Italian textiles, Musella said that "behind the textile product there is a great investment in technical research and product innovation. I'd say that the element of research and of technical innovation of the Italian textiles became just as primary as the creative element."

All the Italian exhibitors interviewed by i-Italy, in fact, acknowledged the importance of combining the traditional, artisanal methods with product innovation and research.

Paolo Calabresi from Lanificio Nova Fides [5] is a wool manufacturer from the Prato district. On this subject, he told i-Italy that their production process relies on "a combination of the two aspects, either as far as taste and color and expertise are concerned and as far as the production is concerned. When we compare our dimensions to the ones of our clients we are actually very tiny and wool still has a lot to do with craftsmanship, but it is important for us to be able to produce a standardized product that is suitable for big companies. There's a very industrial process behind our products."

The most innovative side of the Italian textile production was represented by "New Life [6]," a project that makes it possible to obtain recycled polyester from the transparent plastic bottles collected in the Cuneo province and mechanically processed to produce fabric. "The product combines all the technical and technological knowledge with a strong sustainability spirit. Whether

we produce a sock, a t-shirt, an evening gown by Valentino or Armani, we will always save 90% of the water, 60% energy and around 32% $CO_2$ without sacrificing anything," explained representative Giusy Bettoni.

Even as far as niche products such as lace are concerned, Italy's balanced ratio among tradition and innovation accounts for significant market results.

Corrado Pedroni, representing Pizval [7], told i-Italy that the Italian interpretation of lace is modern, whereas the product is considered ancient: "Clients appreciate our style, a more diurnal style compared to the classic French lace, which is more traditional and suitable for the evening."

Interviewed by i-Italy, Consul General Quintavalle stated that: "These are marvelous textiles, and you can also get a general idea of what will be trending in the Fall and Winter of 2013 as far as fabrics are concerned."

An important trend the Consul pointed out is the one of a "generational turnover" among the exhibitors, accounting for much of the innovation that came to characterize contemporary Italian textiles: "Many of the firms were started by Italians of the previous generation that passed the steering wheel to their sons, who chose the path of tradition but opened the field to beautiful and useful innovations, with great results."

Alberto Pozzi, son of silk producer Carlo Pozzi [8], exhibiting the family company's clothing and tie lines at Premiére Vision, tells i-Italy that his wish is to be able to give continuity to the business and to keep investing in innovation. "With the help of my brother I'm sure we will grow stronger."

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