

I LOVE PARQUET

magazine

INTERNATIONAL

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n. 1
April 2014

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Masterfloor

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WE LOVE WOOD FLOORS

We had a dream: to jump-start a new promotional vehicle for parquet. A means that would give us the chance to put all our knowledge and experience on display, applying our 'vision' of the world of communication and the world of wood floors.

We had to start somewhere, so we started with a portal, iloveparquet.com, a vertical platform unique in its kind, a setting for communication and growth, a place for sharing, a dimension that had never existed before with one protagonist only: wood floors. The objective was to transmit correct information on parquet to final consumers, who can make the right choices with awareness only if they are first well-informed.

The step from portal to digital magazine was short indeed. First and foremost, an interactive magazine that offers operators in the sector a different reading experience: hypertexts, interconnection and an instant link to the sector's protagonists. Technical content and 'visual emotions'. A window on the worlds of building, architecture and design, as well as an attempt to bring greater value and recognition to an entire sector (and a complete production chain that runs from the producer to the retailer to the installer) that amply deserves more recognition and representation.

I love parquet magazine will be this and much more. Our challenge will be to grow together with you, edition after edition, year after year. We await your comments and suggestions.

Enjoy your reading!

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- 10 Sizes
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Oak Cortina model

Wooden floors industries

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Massimo Gasperini at the helm of Gruppo Pavimenti Legno

Massimo Gasperini, CEO at CP Parquet (a parquet producer located in Crespano del Grappa, Treviso, Italy), was appointed the new Executive Director of the Edilegno/FederlegnoArredo Wood Floors Group (the federation that represents the heart of Italian woodworking-furnishing and décor chain) for the 2014-2016 period at the Group's Assembly held in Rimini last Friday, March 21.

Gasperini, who will be flanked by two Vice-Directors and a Technical Committee (see the next edition of I Love Parquet magazine for all the details), succeeds Lorenzo Onofri, an Executive Director who filled two terms of office and led the Group for the previous 6 years, a period that was certainly not easy for the woodworking sector.

I Love Parquet sends all its best wishes to Director Gasperini – a young, dynamic, and above all, farsighted entrepreneur who succeeded in piloting his company over the varied and perilous waters of change to the shores of success.

New buildings and entirely redeveloped public spaces to make the Tower's 1st floor once again one of Paris' most spectacular and attractive locations, 57 meters above the city.

Since the last transformation of the 1st floor 30 years ago, the Tower has welcomed more visitors than during its first century of existence! The pavilions and public spaces of the 1980s are obsolete and not adapted to the number of visitors, the visitors' expectations and technical standards.

The floor reorganization project includes: rebuilding the reception and conference rooms to turn it into one of Paris' most attractive event spaces; rebuilding the pavilion dedicated to visitor

services, particularly restaurants and shops; creating an entertaining and educational museographic path; creating two spectacular attractions: discovering space on the monument and its esplanade thanks to glass flooring and balustrades and an «immersion» film promising strong emotions. Important goals linked to the sustainable development policy implemented at the Eiffel Tower: accessibility and reducing its carbon footprint.

New building standards, solar energy for heating, wind energy, hydraulic energy, rainwater recovery, LED lighting: various techniques will be implemented to help improve the Tower's energy performance.

A new 1st floor for the Eiffel tower



2014 Pritzker Prize awarded to Japanese Shigeru Ban, the architect who renews entire cities



"An extraordinary architect who has been providing creative response to the extreme circumstances provoked by devastating natural catastrophes for twenty years. His buildings often become centers of community and spirituality for populations that have suffered loss and destruction, such as in Ruanda, Turkey, India, China, Italy, Haiti, and in his own nation, Japan". The panel of experts used these words and others in explaining why it had decided to give the coveted 2014 Pritzker Architecture Prize to Shigeru Ban, a Japanese architect renowned for his innovative approach and especially the structures and humble materials he uses, which range from cardboard to bamboo, textiles, and even plastic beer cases and metal boxes. Ban has been visiting human and natural calamity sites for over twenty years, where he has constructed refugee shelters, places of worship and emergency aid structures, all of which he succeeded in endowing with dignity and aesthetic grace in addition to the obvious requirements of simplicity, inexpensiveness, and rapid construction. The award ceremony was held on March 24 in Amsterdam's recently renovated Rijksmuseum.

Announcing MADE expo 2015

Save the Date!



Over 150 journalists were on hand at the press conference to announce the next MADE expo show, which is scheduled to take place at the Milan Fairgrounds Rho from 18 to 21 March 2015. In attendance at the press conference were the Deputy Minister for Economic Development, Carlo Calenda, the Chairman of the General Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria), Giorgio Squinzi, the Chairman of Assimpredil Ance (an association that represents construction companies in and around Milan), Claudio De Albertis, and the

Italian Government's Commissioner for Expo 2015, Giuseppe Sala. Following the success of the 2013 edition (which attracted over 211,000 visitors, including 36,000 from countries other than Italy, up 14% compared to 2012), MADE expo is still looking towards innovation as a driver of its success, along with its biennial schedule, specialization and international reach.

A trade fair that is instrumental in implementing Italy's industrial policy and boosting growth.

With the "Building the Expo" exhibit, MADE expo will also be providing a preview of Expo2015: trade show visitors will have a unique opportunity to see the pavilions, technologies and materials used in the universal exposition expected to bring over 30 million visitors to Milan. "This is a major thrust, since 96% of the companies working for Expo are Italian," said Giuseppe Sala.

MADE expo includes four specialized exhibitions: Construction and materials, Building envelope and windows, Interiors and finishings and Software, technologies and services.

GAZZOTTI CHANGES HANDS

An 80% controlling interest in Gazzotti, a historic producer of high-quality parquet, was purchased by a group of managers who formed TIB Group led by Albo Francesconi, Managing Director of H2i, a member company of IN PRENDO Group, a dynamic and young Roman investment bank. The objective of the purchase is the company's re-launching, the recovery of shares of the Italian market, and the further development of foreign markets such as North America, Russia, Middle Eastern Gulf nations, and Korea, also through the renewal, expansion and value enhancement of the product portfolio with extra attention to those produced by its subsidiary, Idee & Parquet.

Gazzotti is a brand that represents continuity in Made in Italy excellence, and its products are important parts of our past and present history: if this famous Bolognese parquet producer once supplied the best parquet to the Italian Royal Family in the early 1900s, it now makes the floors for the showrooms of Italy's high-fashion stylists Prada, Armani, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton through its subsidiary Idee & Parquet. Gazzotti is based in Emilia Romagna, while its productive unit stands in Trebbio di Reno, a small town in the Province of Bologna. The new owner's prime intention is to re-launch the company, and recover shares of the domestic market, and enter more profitable foreign markets.

8 - 13 April 2014
Milan Fairgrounds, Rho
Salone Internazionale del Mobile
www.cosmit.it

1 - 4 and 15 - 18 April 2014
Moscow
Mosbuild 2014
www.mosbuild.com

27 - 29 April 2014
Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania
East Africa International Trade Exhibition
www.expogr.com/tanzania

April 29 - May 2 2014
Las Vegas
Coverings
www.coverings.com

6 - 8 May 2014
Gulf Manama (Bahrein)
Gulf Bid, Gulf Construction, Gulf Interiors
www.gulfinteriorsexhibition.com

6 - 10 May 2014
Istanbul (Turchia)
YAPI TURKEYBUILD ISTANBUL
www.yapifuari.com.tr

7 - 8 May 2014
Manchester (UK)
Green Build Expo
www.greenbuildexpo.co.uk

23 - 25 May 2014
Santiago (Cile)
Expo Vivienda
www.feriaexpovivienda.cl

3-6 June 2014
Biel - Beirut
Project Lebanon
www.projectlebanon.com

31 luglio - 2 agosto
Santiago (Cile)
100 SHOWROOMS
www.100showrooms.cl

5-9 september june 2014
Paris
Maison & Objet Projets
www.maison-objet.com

17 - 20 january 2015 2014
Hannover (Germany)
Domotex 2015
www.domotex.de

Agenda



For more information: liz.peuster@nwfa.org or 800.422.4556.

Wood Floor of the Year

The NWFA's Wood Floor of the Year awards were developed by National Wood Flooring Association to encourage and recognize innovative craftsmanship and design in wood flooring installations. Since the program began in 1990, more than 200 awards have been presented to NWFA member companies throughout the world. Voting is open through Friday, February 28. A panel of industry experts, and trade and consumer press editors will judge each category. All member companies will have the opportunity to vote on the coveted Members' Choice Award. Each company is allotted one vote in the Members' Choice category. Winners will be recognized at the Awards Dinner & Closing Concert on April 18, 2014 in conjunction with the Wood Flooring Expo.

The world's Top 10 "greenest" projects

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has selected the world's Top 10 most ecologically-sustainable projects, a list intended to promote responsible architecture that protects the environment. Now in its 17th edition, every year the prize showcases the sustainable architecture that has proven most capable of combining design, technology and love for nature and making a positive contribution to the communities in which they live though social responsibility, and above all, elevating the quality of life of the citizens. The keywords in all these projects are recycling, the energy re-qualification of existing structures, savings in power and water, and obviously, energy efficiency. The photo shows: the Federal Center South Building, by ZGF Architects LLP, a building with zero energy consumption that produces more power than it consumes and an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of 20.3 kBtu/sf/year (kBtu/sf = 3.155 kWh/sq m). This building has obtained a 100 point score from ENERGY STAR, exceeding the energy performance specified by its ASHRAE rating by as much as 40%. Built in Seattle, the Federal Center is one of the first buildings that experimented with the use of a geothermal system for heating/cooling and a chilling tank provided with Phase change material. The radiating panels (chilled sails) in the ceiling, combined with the maximum inlet of

daylight possible, complete the picture of this example of ecologically-sustainable architecture with the highest efficiency.



The (bio) resort in the trees

Like a snake that lives on the branches of trees, a wild animal in its natural habitat, this resort known as Tree Snake Houses stands in Pedras Salgadas, Portugal. Conceived by architects Luis Rebelo De Andrade and Thiago Rebelo De Andrade in collaboration with Unicer Group, it has been chosen as Best Resort of the Year by the New York magazine Travel + Leisure. Each unit is made with materials procured locally for increased coherence with the environment and respect for the criteria of eco-sustainability. Slate "skin" and wooden "backbone" are the structure's principal components. Insulation layers, solar energy panels, a water recycling system, and low-consumption l.e.d. lighting also distinguish the design project. Each unit is practically an efficiency apartment composed of a bathroom, kitchenette, and bedroom. There are two windows: one looks out at the park, the other frames the stars in the sky.



Refined bucolic effect and the characteristic signs of the passage of time.
The Timeless Collection by Sjoen Parkett, Memory & Gatha parquet. Hand-planed and antiquated, the wood's surface is treated with high-resistance ecological varnish made with natural pigments and further refined with Osmo wax oil.
www.woodco.it

Photo of the month

ITLAS

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Perfetto livellamento finale grazie alla ghiera di regolazione millimetrica e al correttore di pendenza EasyFlat che permettono spostamenti millimetrici in altezza.

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Zeromono, by **Vermeister**, is a single component moisture-cure silane-terminated adhesive that does not contain water, solvents, isocyanates, epoxy or amino compounds and for this reason does not bear any health or risk warnings or symbols. The EC1 PLUS classification certifies the very low emission of volatile organic compounds both when being applied and once the floor is in use. Certified soundproofing qualities (insulation from footsteps); Certified Heat Resistance; No hazard labels.

www.vermeister.com

Unisil, by **Chimiver Panseri**, is a prepolymer based, single-component adhesive with a silanic termination (MS technology). It hardens with atmospheric humidity and becomes resistant to water, temperature and ageing in approx. 36-48 hours.

Recommended for gluing pre-finished parquet onto marble, grit, tiles, ceramic or marble-chip floor, etc. Also suitable for gluing parquet onto underfloor heating and cooling system. Certificates: EC1R; Attestation CCA Environmentally Compatible Product; Sound Reduction; Heat conductivity. Unisil can contribute to the achievement of QI CREDIT 4.1 according to the parameters of the GEV dated 03 March 2009, because it meets the certification LEED protocol.

www.chimiver.com



Tover offers a two-component pure polyurethane adhesive: Tovcol PU2C which contains no water, no solvent, no epoxy resins and consequently avoids any type of allergy. It has a long working time (up to 60 minutes), an excellent adhesion both on absorbent and not sub-floors, it is elastic and so perfectly suitable for any species, any sizes even on

underfloor heating systems. The adhesive is now packed in the exclusive packing system: "Twin-Pack System" where the B component is put inside the A component bucket cover. Easy, practical, clean, it represents a real revolution both in the products palletizing for transport and in the use of the products themselves.

www.tover.com



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www.wakol.com

Icasil, by **Ica**, is a monocomponent adhesive for parquet. Contains no amines, isocyanates or silicones. Ready-to-use adhesive based on an innovative hybrid polymer, supplied in practical aluminum-foil bags weighing 7 Kg each. Suitable for the adhesion of all species of wooden floors, both traditional and prefinished, with finger jointing, even in large formats, on cement or anhydrite foundations, and on adequately roughened ceramic/marble surfaces. Also suitable for floors fitted with underfloor heating.

www.icaspa.com



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TO BE OR NOT TO BE

TEXT
DONATA
MARAZZINI

It isn't all that difficult to see. An interview with CNR IValsa National Research Council of Italy Trees and Timber Institute Director Stefano Berti

Professor Berti, many people consider bamboo to be a 'woody material'. Why are they wrong? What's the difference?

Stefano Berti: From a purely histological point of view, wood is the result of the secondary growth typical of gymnosperms and dicotyledons. In this sense, bamboo, which is produced by plants in the monocotyledon class, cannot be defined as wood. It is the anatomical and the histological characteristics, we must recall, that determine the properties of wood, just as they do for any other material of biological origin. In these terms, the behavior typical of wood cannot be unconditionally compared with that of a material that has significant differences, even if it vaunts some similar aspects..

In the light of these definitions, how must we proceed in regard to Standard EN 14342? Can it be applied to products made in bamboo or not?

Stefano Berti: Standard EN 14342: 2008 "Wood flooring - Characteristics, evaluation of conformity and marking" defines and specifies the essential characteristics of wood floors and parquet, and also the test methods to be used to determine these characteristics for indoor use in both public and private areas. It regards the types of wood flooring defined by product standards EN 13227, EN 13228, EN 13488, EN 13489, EN 14354, and EN 14761 while also envisioning the evaluation of conformity and the marking criteria for such products. Considering "terminology" Standard EN 13756, which

defines wood flooring as an "assembly of single wooden elements laid on a primary structure or on the understructure" and parquet as "wood flooring with 2.5 mm minimum thickness of the top layer prior to laying", we can see that Standard EN 14342 cannot be applied to products made in bamboo because bamboo is not wood.

Continuing the attempt to compare the behavior of bamboo to that of wood, it would be objectively difficult to apply Standard EN 14342 in light of certain performance characteristics required.

As regards durability, for example, the Standard cites the classes of biological risk specified in EN 335-1 "Durability of wood and wood-based products - Definition of classes of use - Part 2: Application of solid wood", whereas for natural durability, it cites EN 350-2 "Durability of wood and wood-based products - Natural durability of solid wood. Guide to the natural durability and treatability of species of wood imported into Europe".

Naturally enough, bamboo is not mentioned in this Standard because it is not wood.

It must also be borne in mind that following this clearly controversial situation, the need to find a solution to the problem has led to the creation of a work group at European level expressly for the purpose in the context of CEN/TC 175/WG33. The work group's task is to develop the specific standard for this type of product. We can only hope that it succeeds in accomplishing the task soon.

the allure and fantasy typical of the finest Italian craftsmanship

VIEW



1934Mix is a new collection of natural wood floors in mixed colors that blend seamlessly into modern interior design trends. The creation of this new way of living wood floors was made possible by standardizing the colour finishes and adjusting the amount and sizes of the different planks that make up the mixture. As with all XILO1934 products, also the collection 1934Mix is finished with water-based lacquer only and the 3-layer planks are produced using only vinylic glues, with no health risk emissions. www.xilo1934.it

Bisanzio is art in wood 100% made in Italy: square tiles, floor centrepieces and perimeter friezes are available in 10 or 14 mm thicknesses. 6 Modules and 11 Decorative Elements, all made from solid wood, in thicknesses of between 10 and 14 mm. The Modules are square-shaped sections for flooring entire surfaces, made in various sizes with woods selected by the customer. The Decorative Elements are flooring centrepieces, edging bands and square inlays, to be used as central or perimeter decorations; they are produced in various dimensions. www.tavar.it



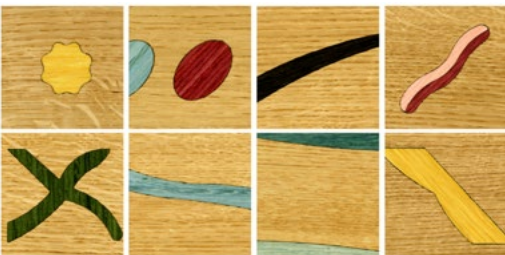
New design, new dimensions, new life for a parquet with a rustic and modern effect, Contorta Quercus worked with lime effect. Laid in accordance with the Primula Module Plank, that re-propose the Versailles motif without frames and squares, the maxi dimension planks are cut and laid in a continuous plot, a puzzle that develops without interruption up to the wall of the room. Modules Planks and Epoch Planks Collection by Cadarin Group. www.cadaringroup.it

An amazing combination of materials makes this wooden flooring unique. 97x97cm blocks in sawn European Oak, painted Cannes, are enriched with inlays in steel, valuable materials, marble and stones. All your dreams can come true with CP Parquet Lab Design: a laboratory that investigates new wooden flooring solutions, working in collaboration with designers, architects and planners. This project has been developed with Michele Gravina from the Bari company, Mass Marble and Stones. www.cpparquet.it



Long-time Berti experience, research and develop work of its Technical Office department allow to understand the requirements of every customer and to transform them into wood floors parquet, marquetry works of any complexity thanks to specific software. By working with designers and famous architects, technical department thanks to the laser technology can realize and produce marquetry flooring parquet, wood floors and walls. Berti is not only addressed to the private owners but can offer a complete service even to Trade and Public Contract, by proposing specific solutions for parquet floors supply and installation for showrooms, hotels and restaurants. www.berti.net

The PreMass Intarsi by Ali Parquets combines the characteristics of PreMass and PreMass Color. It is created by inserting decorative motifs of PreMass Color coloured wood into PreMass strips, using an extremely high-precision laser technique. Designed by Renato Toso and Noti Massari, the motifs are abstract or inspired by nature:



a bright selection of exquisite ornamentation to create inserts, textures and frames. www.aliparquets.com

The Lido floor by La Brenta introduces an innovative material that is a polyester blend with marble and nacre dust. With this new combination design seems to come to live, above all thanks to the particular treatment applied to this material that is in high relief to the touch, and to the handmade planning realized on the whole surface. This product can be provided in high relief or completely smoothed. www.essenze.org



Bolzan presents its prefinished compositions: two or three-layer parquet drawings made of different timber species and different finishing. Upon request they can be enriched with marble inserts. www.bolzanparquet.it



Warm colors printed on oak boards, using only natural paints and a matt lacquering that preserves the beauty unaltered in time, give rise to a truly original and playful flooring: this is Bauwerk proposal with the pre-finished double layer parquet Mandala, designed by the swiss stylist Virginia Maissen. Each lath -rigorously made of natural wood- is different and it is assembled to deliberately create an irregular and "old" surface. Therefore each installation (2047 different combinations and laying patterns are possible) is a unique flooring. Mandala collection is part of Bauwerk Vintage Edition with many different proposals designed by Virginia Maissen. www.bauwerk-parkett.com

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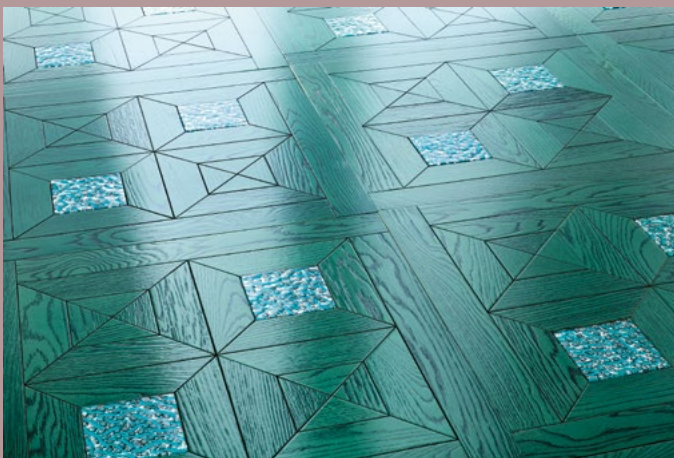


The heat and the ancestral sensations inherent to the wood help to create places that were not there before, giving at the same time the old feelings of well-being is inextricably linked to identity the original dwelling. New ideas can enrich the environment with a distinctive touch and quite natural: a real high-end tailoring, capable of giving to the eye and to the touch intense feelings of well-being, surprising games with geometric able to redesign the space in a dynamic and creating new and innovative atmosphere. Find out with Fiemme 3000.
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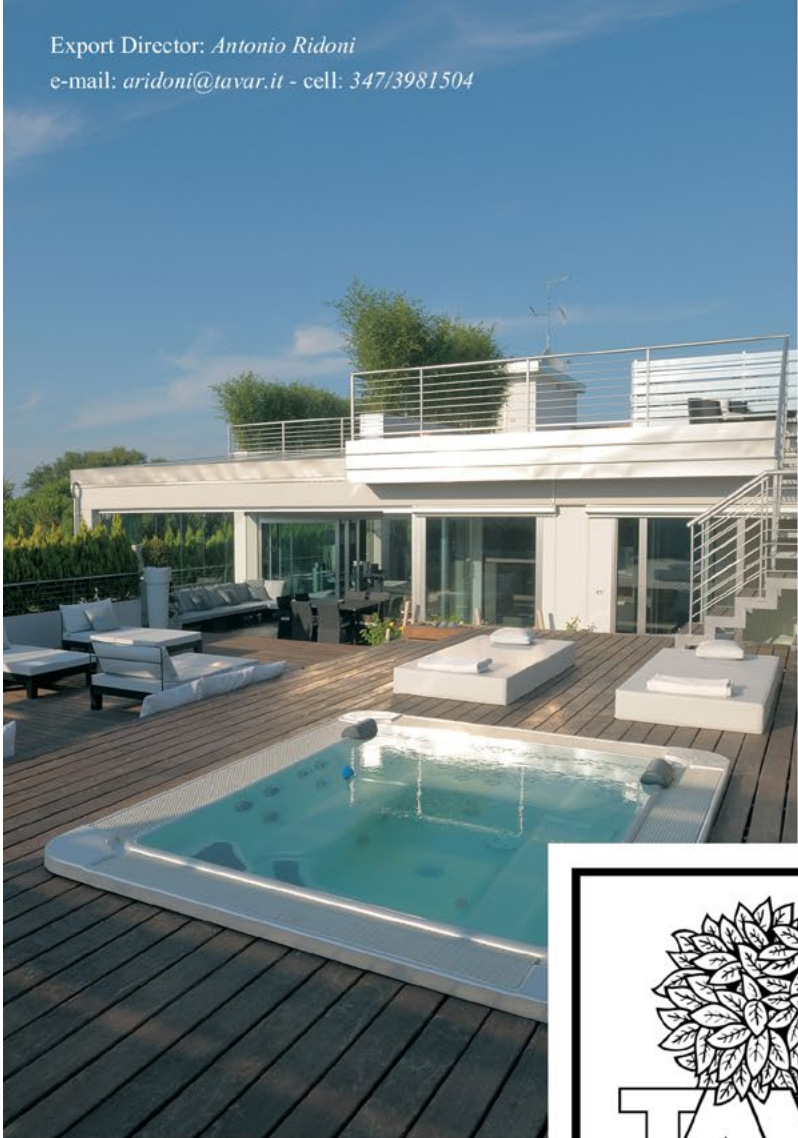


People choose a wood floor, for the charm, the elegance, enduring, heat... wood is a living material, pleasantly stimulates the senses and the mind, as well as having considerable technical and performance characteristics. The artistic Stemauparquet enhances every aesthetic feature and enhances the environment. The result is a highly decorative flooring suitable for large and representative flat.
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www.garbelotto.it

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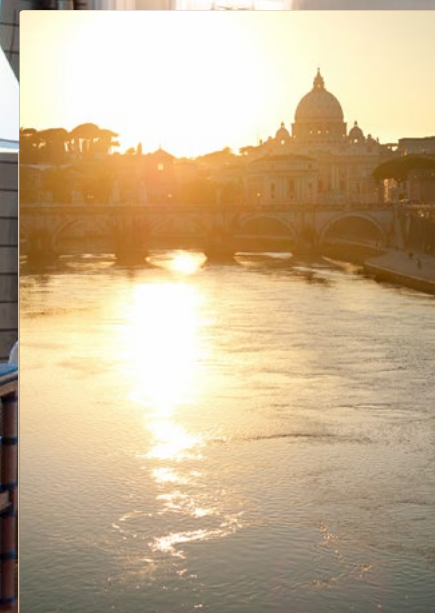
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ROME

Rome's history spans more than two and a half thousand years, since its legendary founding in 753 BC. Rome is one of the oldest continuously occupied cities in Europe. It is referred to as "The Eternal City", a notion expressed by ancient Roman poets and writers. In the ancient world it was successively the capital city of the Roman Kingdom, the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, and is regarded as one of the birthplaces of Western civilization.



WOOD
FLOORS

For the Hotel Flora suites, **Garbelotto Master Floor** laid these handsome boards of natural brushed oak varnished with wax effect - the choice of preference in green building - to exact measure. All the company's floors are guaranteed 100% Made in Italy.



100% WOOD

American walnut and tulipwood go centre stage in the city of Nieuwegein's new theatre and arts centre



TEXT
ANNA BARONI

Frits van Dongen and Patrick Koschuch, who are both formerly architects of 'de Architekten Cie'; latest project is the Kunstcluster (Art Cluster), situated in the Dutch city of Nieuwegein. The building is destined to become a landmark within the town centre which is in the process of being regenerated over the next few years. A new town hall is to be built, with shops, homes and offices above street level and an underground car park below. The Kunstcluster is made up of two blocks; the theatre and arts centre and a multi-storey car park, which includes a retail outlet on the ground floor.

The new theatre includes an auditorium and a studio theatre. The main auditorium can seat up to 700 people, with a podium and ample stage space for all types of production. The studio theatre is considerably smaller with the capacity to seat 200 people but has a foldaway stage so it can be used for various events, including pop and rock music concerts. The future arts centre will be located above the theatre, a multifunctional venue for music, dance and acting classes. The ceiling and balcony in the main auditorium are entirely clad in acoustic MDF panelling with a natural veneer facing in American walnut. Frits van Dongen, who



is currently Chief State architect alongside his work at his own practice commented, “We chose walnut to enhance the overall cocoon type feeling within the building – a warm atmosphere and community feeling, which the curves of the wood also reinforce.” Over 3,000 MDF walnut panels were manufactured by the bespoke joinery contractor, Keijzers Lundiform. The panels were veneered by hand at the contractor’s Polish plant and, before being shipped to the Netherlands, were carefully selected and assembled in order to obtain consistent tone and grain pattern. Twan Derks, the project coordinator explains, “Using a 3D modelling system and CNC machine, each panel was cut to size and numbered.

Some of the more complex sections had to be assembled at our warehouse before being installed on site. The ceiling panels, for example are curved and had to be bent first to fit exactly the right shape. To obtain a high quality of acoustics, the panels are not flush but slightly staggered on different levels to absorb sound. The curved rim sections of certain balconies are made in solid American walnut.”

The charm of American tulipwood

Completing the complex are three spectacular foyers and a theatre café which looks on to the town’s central square, the Stadsplein. Frits van Dongen and Patrick Koschuch specified American tulipwood cladding

for the curved walls in the foyer because they were attracted to tulipwood’s varied natural tones with cream white and pale olive green in the sapwood contrasting with dark purple, brown and olive streaks in the heartwood. “This wood specie was the perfect choice to symbolise the variety of spaces within the building and the interaction between the foyer, the hall and the audience,” commented Koschuch. To meet the architect’s specifications Derako International, the cladding system suppliers, engineered the solid tulipwood slats in three different dimensions (45x70 mm, 30x98 mm and 15x126 mm), which were then randomly fixed on their metal carrier system. The variety of tones is enhanced by

the deliberate random assembly of the slats. The tulipwood slats are also fixed on slightly different levels to increase sound absorption. Sita Veer from Derako International explains, “The tulipwood cladding wraps around several curved walls and therefore our production plant had to shape the metal carriers to 7 different types of radii using precision tools. We also had to take into consideration the wall lights which are embedded in the wooden wall cladding. We based the plans on the building’s CAD drawing to design our carrier system”. The finished wall cladding successfully highlights the natural colour variations in tulipwood and this is enhanced by the random placement of the cladding slats.

The external glazing of the foyer area is coated with a print finish on the inside, creating an illusion of stage curtains. This is also functional and reduces the level of light penetration from the south and east facing façades, preventing overheating in the grand staircase and foyer area on warm days. The level of pigmentation of the print is sufficiently transparent to be seen through. A ‘shop window,’ roughly 20 metres high, enables passers-by walking across the central square to get a glimpse of the foyer and audience inside. Theatre-goers, in turn, overlook the town centre from the three foyers, respectively 5, 10 and 15 metres above ground level. The façade is floodlit after dark with energy-saving LED lighting.

In the redeveloped town centre nearly all the cars will be parked underground with the exception of the multi-storey car park next to the Kunstcluster. This block is literally a green lung in the stone-built urban environment. The design intent was to make the parking structure carbon-neutral both to build as well to operate. The garage facade on the Stadsplein side is four metres thick and contains a cascade stairway that wends its way up and down through a bamboo plantation six metres high. Prints on the balustrades and other glazed surfaces graphically reflect the bamboo image. The ground floor accommodates a retail outlet to create a vibrant city streetscape.

RABOBANKZAAL **BALKON**





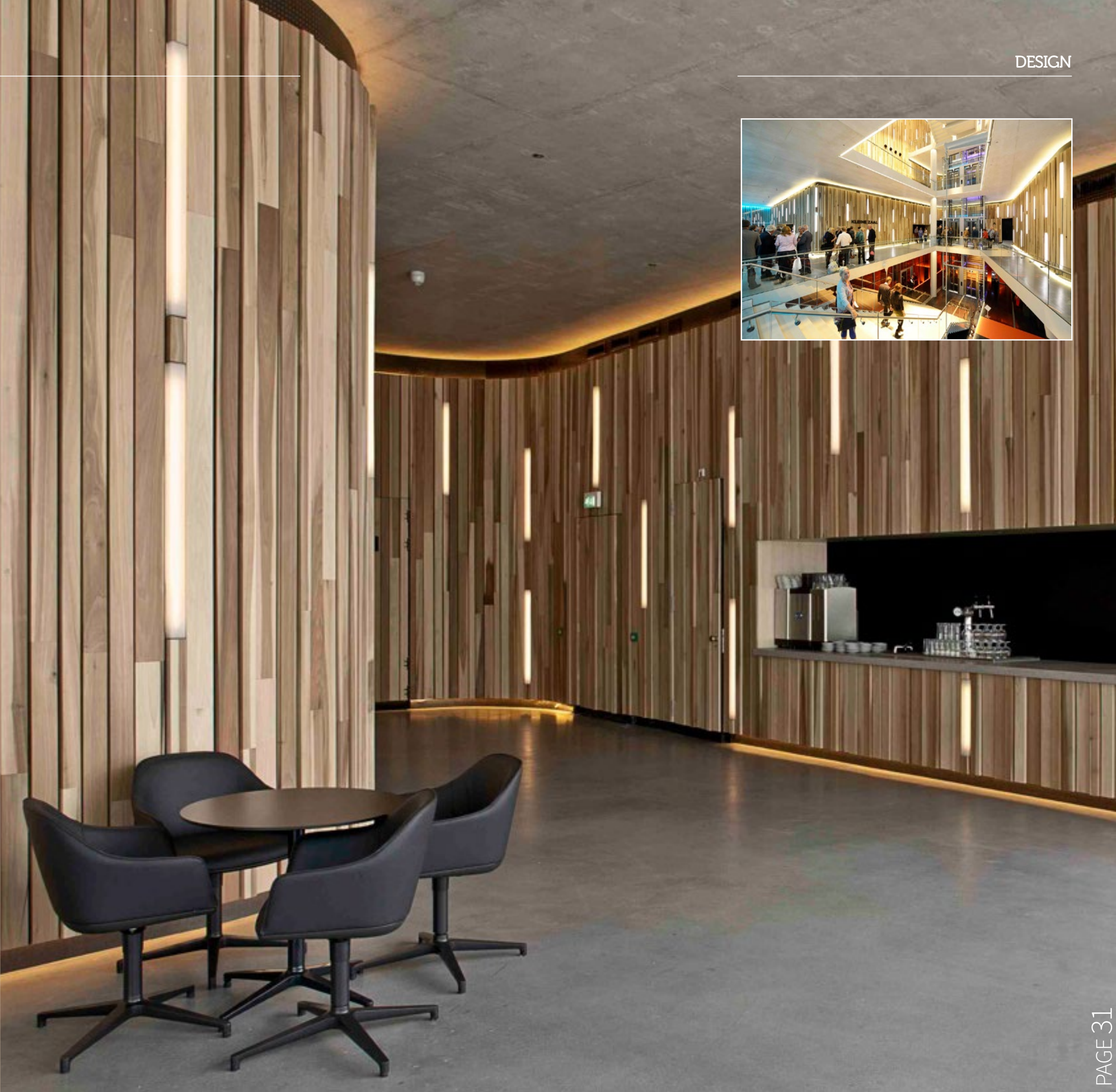
American walnut (*Juglans nigra*)
American black walnut has a creamy white sapwood, while the heartwood is light brown to dark chocolate brown, occasionally with a purplish cast and darker streaks. The wood is generally straight grained, but sometimes with a wavy or curly grain. American black walnut is very fashionable for use in furniture, cabinet making, architectural interiors and high class joinery. Walnut is a tough, hard timber of medium density, with moderate bending and crushing strengths and low stiffness. It has a good steam bending classification.



American tulipwood (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
American tulipwood has a creamy white sapwood which may be streaked. The heartwood varies from pale yellowish brown to olive green. This green colour tends to darken on exposure to UV light and turn brown. The wood has a medium to fine texture and is straight grained. One of the best value and most versatile US hardwood species, tulipwood is widely used in construction, furniture and interior joinery. Although relatively light in weight and soft, American tulipwood has excellent mechanical properties and has a very high strength to weight ratio making it ideal for laminated beams and structures. Tulipwood is often painted or stained, but the use of natural finishes to show off its exciting colour variations and grain patterns, is increasing.



AHEC
The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) is the leading international trade association for the U.S. hardwood industry, representing the committed exporters among U.S. hardwood companies and all the major U.S. hardwood product trade associations. AHEC concentrates its efforts on providing architects, specifiers, designers and end-users with technical information on the range of species, products and sources of supply. AHEC produces a full range of technical publications which are available free of charge by visiting www.americanhardwood.org





FEP EUROPEAN PARQUET MARKET STILL AWAITING STABILISATION



Indeed FEP's (European Federation of the Parquet Industry) preliminary forecast for the year which just ended indicates a similar scenario of a further contraction in the order of 5%. This percentage is based on best estimates received from member country representatives at the recent Board meeting held at the DOMOTEX fair in Hannover. It should be seen as a first prognosis subject to variations, in anticipation of the complete data to be communicated at FEP's annual General Assembly at the beginning of June in Malaga.

As was witnessed in the past few years, the results show some variation from country to country and even from quarter to quarter. However, the overall picture does not

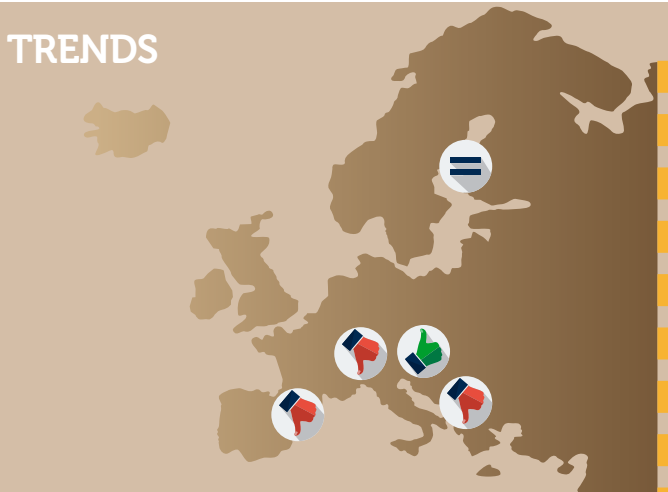
seem as polarized as it once was. Indeed, countries which were performing rather well and driving the markets upwards also seem to lose momentum. From a regional perspective, it can be stated that markets in the south of the EU (e.g. Spain, Italy, and France) still face serious difficulties, with losses which could reach double digits. In the north, the situation is somewhat better but developments are still slightly negative or, in the best case, stable (e.g. in Sweden). Central Europe remains the best performing region, where Switzerland confirms its status of steady "parquet country" with an expected growth of 6%. Both Austria and Germany should however also see a consumption evolution for

After a year in which the overall consumption figures of the European parquet Industry contracted by 5.88%, the first forecasts for 2013 seem to follow a similar trend

TEXT
FEDERICA
FIORELLINI

EC gave more optimistic expectations for the year to come. This should give a boost to overall consumer confidence throughout Europe. All Board members moreover strongly stress the conclusions of the FEP consumers' perception studies, which confirm that "parquet is a great natural product, very much valued and desired by consumers, who see real wood parquet as an indispensable element of interior decoration of the future." In this context, FEP Chairman Lars Gunnar Andersen commented: "We have all the reasons to believe that the current trend is a cyclic evolution but not a structural change. We are witnessing a downsizing of the market, which does not mean that it is altogether absent. Even if the exponential growth witnessed between 1991 and 2007 has seen downward corrections in the recent past, there is no doubt that better days are ahead of us."

2013 just below zero. These figures and tendencies have to be seen in the light of the major challenges which the sector faced in 2013 and still faces today, notably the continuously stiff competition, extremely high unemployment rates in some important EU regions and the never certain exchange rates, especially the EUR/USD ratio. Though the ongoing struggle confronting parquet producers in certain regions gives reason for concern, the latest economic forecasts of the



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FOCUS ON THE

An instrument is, and must be, a support used for the purpose of executing an activity better. When this concept is clearly understood and shared by one and all, then we can begin treating the point of purchase as an instrument that helps generate more sales. You can't treat your sales outlet simply as a box you try to stuff with as much as you can in the hopes that the more products you show, the greater your chances for success will be. This might have been the case when generic sales succeeded in getting results, but today there are no more margins of error, and it is unthinkable to apply a business model based on "trial and error". The sales outlet is the place where supply and demand come together, and as a result, this point of contact must be made as efficacious as possible for your potential customer.

MAPPING THE CLIENT

How? First of all, you simply cannot afford not to map the customers who come to your sales outlet frequently (whether they enter spontaneously or whether they're stimulated): if we fail to understand the characteristics of our clients (age, occupation, first-home owner, second-home owner, etc.) it will be impossible for us to understand the needs that we need to focus on (reducing at least one discomfort or generating at least one benefit). If the

Your showroom is an instrument. It should not be treated simply as a container in which you insert as many things as you can. You need to make your instrument more efficient. More coherent. Consider these guidelines.

TEXT
DAVIDE
GABRIELLI

product/service offer we make is merely generic, the result can only be generic. Once we've compiled the profile of the customer who chooses our sales outlet, we can begin defining the

products, services and styles that will make him or her come back more often. From here on in, everything must be coherent: our communication activities, our website, and especially

our assortment of brands and products, and the way we put them on display.

HOW TO DISPLAY

The latest trends in merchandising emphasize the importance of providing clean and orderly display areas in which the retailer presents his selection of products to his reference target clearly. The customer will be willing to pay for this service as well.

For example, if the sales outlet bases its claim on innovation, the retailer's assortment should always present the latest products and innovations, while also illustrating the new trends in

POINT OF PURCHASE

styling, the use of materials, and display techniques. Merchandising is one of marketing's strongest levers that dealers can and must consciously apply in their relations with consumers.

MERCHANDISING

Merchandising is the combination of actions conducted for the purpose of promoting the sale of products inside the point of purchase or any other type of structure addressed to the final client. These actions primarily regard the sales outlet's physical characteristics in order to implement the distributive marketing strategies. Using a carefully-reasoned

display and other techniques, merchandising endows the product with apparently higher value and trigger a series of mechanisms that orient the consumer in the purchase decision-making process. In addition to the seemingly simple action of optimizing the yield/efficiency of sales outlet display area, merchandising also helps manage stock levels better and increases the rotation of inventory.

DECIDE WHERE TO POSITION YOURSELF

I think it's clear that the recommendations I've made so far can be applied only after we've clearly

understood just who our customer is (high-end or low-end?) because the communication methods that work with one will be much less effective with the other, the products required by the latter may not be needed by the former, the store design that attracts a high-end consumer will only alienate a low-end customer, and the pre-sale pitch you make to low-end buyer will make little sense to consumers in search of higher segment products. One of the biggest problems Italian dealers have today is that they have not made a choice of strategy. You have to make a coherent decision about where to position yourself and your product, and then decide which architects, which brands, which products, which associates, and which installers to work with. This is the only way to make the client understand that the more he pays, the more he receives. The showroom formula in which products are displayed in an outdated, inadequate way while the salesman talks about how excellent and unique they all are simply no longer works: our non-verbal communication and the merchandising techniques we've used to display the product instead say so much more. Sometimes all it takes is an open mind and an attentive eye on what really does work in the market, and then act take action. If your current business model isn't

producing results, it means just one thing: it's time to change it! So it might be time to question yourself and your business and think about changing. If you want to position yourself in the market's higher end, you had better be prepared to stop doing everything you do in the lower-end, but more than anything else, you should answer the following question: "Why would a high-end brand use my sales outlet to distribute its value?". If you're unable to come up with a complete and convincing answer, it might not be the right time for you to make such a change. If, instead, you wish to position yourself in the lower price segment, be prepared to shave off every needless cost (overly furnished and decorated sales outlets serve no purpose here, these clients aren't paying for this, they choose you for your price) and above all, be willing to accept that mid-high range brands will eventually "drop" you because the sales instrument you've become is incoherent with their value. Yes, the change that everyone is talking about also involves choices like these, and if you're interested in eliminating waste – and especially in giving every future investment you make a better probability of return – there's just one thing you have to do: decide. And then be consistent with the decision you've made.

THE AUTHOR

Davide Gabrielli has specialized in marketing and in each one of its phases, from analyzing company identity to the positioning of the product in the market, from the planning of sales strategy to its implementation at the point of purchase and sales network.

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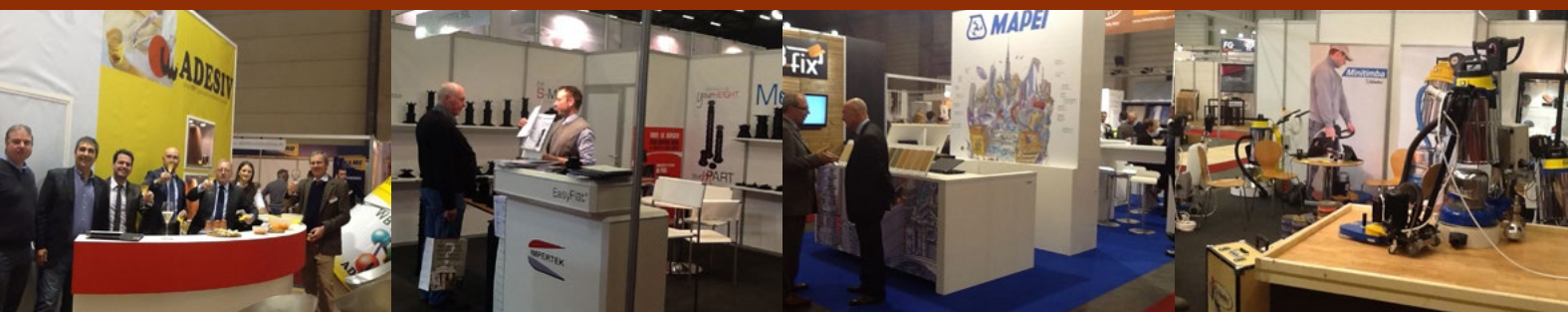




SUCCESSFUL FIRST EUROPEAN FLOOR & WALL EXHIBITION IN GHENT

3509 visitors and over 110 exhibitors for a trade fair on wooden floors, terraces and exterior wall covering, vinyl, laminate, and PVC

TEXT
ANNA BARONI



From Sunday 16 to Tuesday 18 March, Flanders Expo in Ghent (Belgium) was the meeting place for the international sector for wooden flooring and exterior wall cladding, terraces, vinyl, laminate, and PVC floors. All together, 3509 visitors came to the show.

European Floor & Wall Exhibition proved to be a pleasant and attractive trade fair. It gave a varied national and international public three days of opportunity to familiarise themselves with scores of new products and suppliers from all European countries and even further afield. The show also offered scope for networking. Organiser Filip De Ridder comments, "As regards networking, the small scale

of the show is definitely an advantage. Such close contacts would hardly be possible at a giant event". After the three days, the show had recorded 3509 visitors. Monday proved to be the busiest day with 1388 visitors. Tuesday was also a popular day with 1146 visitors. Sunday attracted 975 visitors, despite the exceptionally fine spring weather outside. "The enthusiasm and optimism of both exhibitors and visitors was particularly noticeable; a sign that the market is on the way up," said De Ridder.

High quality visitors
Most exhibitors expressed their satisfaction at the quality of the visitors, ranging from local parquet fitters, joiners, interior specialists,

and architects (purchasers, generally speaking), and building promoters to national and international buyers from all corners of Europe and even further afield. It's worth pointing out that no one abused the offer of free drinks at any time. Fillip De Ridder comments, "That says a lot for the seriousness of the visitors."

Seminars and workshops
Visitors to the European Floor & Wall Exhibition also had the opportunity to take part in a number of seminars and workshops with various themes such as renovating old parquet floors, parquet floors and air humidity, marketing and social media for the flooring industry, and colour and material trends for the interior and flooring sectors in 2015.

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