

Traccia 1 - Italian Architecture in Jimma

The project “Italian Architecture in Jimma. Photography & Storytelling” seeks to illustrate and promote the rich Italian historical and architectural heritage in the city of Jimma—virtually unknown to the general public and little studied by specialists.

At the same time, this cultural initiative—bringing together Italian and Ethiopian contributors in a vibrant cultural dialogue through a range of research activities, exhibitions, publications, and conferences in Addis Ababa, Jimma, and Rome—highlights major urban redevelopment projects underway in this remarkable city, promoted by the Ethiopian Government and partly made possible by the Mattei Plan for Africa launched by the Italian Government.

The architectural quality of the plans and projects initiated during the Italian occupation (1935–1941) for what was then called “Jimma futura” (Future Jimma) exemplifies Italian rationalism, employing a simple, accessible, solid, and traditional architectural language that deliberately eschews avant-garde pretensions.

In Jimma, the foundations of a new city were laid, featuring a clear and legible layout, composed of modern, durable, and efficient structures that have admirably withstood the passing of time and adapted well to changing functional demands.

Marco Introini’s photographs celebrate the charm of this architecture: its clean and well-proportioned volumes, the interplay of light and shadow, its interior spaciousness, fluid surfaces, and occasionally surprising, innovative details.

This cultural project, developed by the Italian Cultural Institute in cooperation with the Italian Embassy in Addis Ababa, won the public tender organized by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Ministry of Culture for the promotion of Italian photography abroad. It involves collaboration among several leading cultural and academic institutions from both countries, such as the Treccani Institute and the Universities of Addis Ababa and Jimma.

Traccia 2 - Italian Fashion Jewellery

Italian jewellery is historically one of the products in greatest demand on international markets, which recognize the formal elegance, the creative energy, the manufacturing quality and the attention to materials and workmanship that make the Made in Italy trademark unique.

Jewellery engages many sectors, from art to archaeology, design and finance, but its relationship with fashion represents the intersection of two industries of Italian excellence, in the synergy between fashion designers and fashion jewellery makers but also the construction of the value of Italian fashion.

Fashion jewellery is jewellery made by fashion designers, costume jewellery makers and independent designers, where the value is not found in the use of precious materials but instead in the intangible value of creativity, craftsmanship and innovation. This is why Italian fashion jewellery represents an extraordinary concentration of culture, beauty and manufacturing to be valued.

The materials and techniques in use are of ancient tradition or unthinkable ones until a few years ago such as 3D printing and rendering, two design and production technologies of recent invention.

The future of fashion will be determined by two conditions. The first concerns sustainability: materials and processes of jewellery, as of fashion, must be sustainable and environmental conscious, and the second one concerns the ability to use the technological tools, from social networks to e-commerce, which represents the trade of the future.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has therefore decided to endorse this publication and an international exhibition on Italian fashion jewellery to promote national excellence worldwide.

The Italian fashion jewellery supply chain is extremely varied, according to the model “from industry to the workshop”, which includes both international companies and family-run businesses, costume jewellery makers, craftspeople and designers used to producing small, high quality series. They represent the connective tissue and the quality of the Made in Italy label and it is to them, to their fine work that this volume is dedicated.