

[www.benettongroup.com/openingsoon](http://www.benettongroup.com/openingsoon)

**Benetton exhibits the future of the fashion retail space, in partnership with POLI.design and with the contribution of the Fabrica design group**

## **OPENING SOON...**

**Milan Triennale, 27 January - 15 February 2009**

Milan, 26 January 2009. The central theme of the exhibition **OPENING SOON...** is the present and future evolution of the retail space, an area in which Benetton has been a leading worldwide player ever since its revolutionary debut in Italy in the Sixties. **OPENING SOON...** is organised by Benetton Group in partnership with POLI.design, the Consortium of the Politecnico di Milano, and curated by Andrea Branzi and Luisa Collina, both lecturers at the Design Faculty of the same Politecnico.

UNITED COLORS  
OF BENETTON.

 **POLI.DESIGN**  
Consortio  
del Politecnico  
di Milano

The exhibition will preview at the Milan Triennale on 26 January 2009 before opening to the public from 27 January to 15 February 2009. Organized in three main sections, the exhibition features: the work of the six young creatives who reached the finals of *Colorsdesigner*, the international contest promoted and organised by POLI.design for Benetton in 2007; the most innovative retail design trends to have emerged from the over 700 projects submitted to the contest; ten cutting-edge store designs commissioned to renowned architects and studios, which will be built by Benetton in the near future. The concept of the exhibition was realized in collaboration with the design team of Fabrica, Benetton Group's communication research centre.

*"This exhibition," explains Alessandro Benetton, executive deputy chairman of Benetton Group, "is the starting point for research which once again gives voice to the ideas, creativity and talent of young people. It is our conviction that supporting this type of research and merit is a necessary response to the current economic crisis, in order to be ready to seize the moment of recovery as soon as it arrives. For Benetton, design is the essence of the group, the synthesis of the product and corporate culture, a mirror for brand values, and a decisive form of communication with the world".*

With this philosophy – making tangible investments in new ideas, rewarding emerging talents as well as established names, looking to the world and its transformation – Benetton has recently launched the new competition *Designinginteheran* (launched on 15 December, closing at the end of March 2009) for the creation of two multistorey buildings in Teheran and open to young people the world over.

The exhibition **Opening Soon...** begins with the innovative ideas of the six finalists in the *Colordesigner* contest, which saw entries from young creatives, designers and architects from all over the world, who answered the call to develop new retail concepts suitable for large international fashion groups. The designs are by Luis Miguel Pereira (Portugal), Godefroy Meyer (Canada), Kazuya Yamazaki, Ayako Koderu and Yuri Naruse (Japan), and Tommaso Bistacchi (Italy). Of the six finalists, the jury chose the Portuguese architect Pereira, whose design – *Combispace* – links the different levels of the building with fluidity and originality, creating a flexible system of transformable spaces and product displays. "*The Design Faculty of the Politecnico di Milano*," declared Andrea Branzi, architect, designer and chairman of the jury, "*took part in the formulation and assessment of the results of the international contest promoted and organised by POLI.design for Benetton, with a spirit of collation in an experimental project regarding a topic that has gained considerable urban and social relevance.*"

The second section of the exhibition uses a series of video installations to recount the over 700 creative ideas entered in the *Colordesigner* contest, proposing future fashion retail spaces, reinterpreted, for example, as places for social meetings and aesthetic sensations, evolving amidst hi-tech solutions and ecofriendly innovations. Models of stores that are increasingly open to the city, almost merging with its fabric or, alternatively, stores seen as a refuge from urban life. Or, again, retail spaces open to recycling used garments, and where possible, an ever-greater customisation of products.

The third section of the exhibition features ten designs by seven established architects and studios, whom Benetton asked to design and build innovative and sophisticated flagship stores, which will open in the next few years in cities symbolising the new transformation in the world. From *Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas* who redesigned an entire building in the centre of Rome, to *Alberto Campo Baeza* with his contribution for a store for Samara, in Russia; from *Laboratorio.Quattro* who was responsible for the designs for Aktyubinsk, Kazakhstan and Perm, Russia to *Lissoni Associati Milano* who designed the store for Istanbul, and studio *Arassociati*, those of Pristina, Kosovo and Irkutsk, Russia. Likewise, *Luciano Giorgi and Lili Bonforte Architetti* of Pavia who designed the store for Odessa, Ukraine and *Cino Zucchi*, those of Brussels, Belgium and Kaliningrad, Russia.

For Benetton the exhibition at the Triennale and the creation of new cutting-edge stores represent the latest steps in a long history that began in the 1960s, when the company revolutionised the traditional point of sales, transforming it into an open, young, colourful and welcoming space, thanks to innovations such as interiors easily interpreted from the street, removal of the sales counter, diffused lighting to highlight the bright colours of the goods on sale and a widespread presence in city centres around the world.

For further information and contacts:

Media

**+39 0422519036**

[www.benettongroup.com/openingsoon](http://www.benettongroup.com/openingsoon)

[www.benettongroup.com/press](http://www.benettongroup.com/press)

[www.benettonpress.mobi](http://www.benettonpress.mobi)

[www.polidesign.net](http://www.polidesign.net)

[www.triennale.it](http://www.triennale.it)

[www.fabrica.it](http://www.fabrica.it)