

PRESS RELEASE

The Simoncini Method *In search of an Aesthetic whole*

curated by: Elisa Rebellato, Antonio Cavedoni
created and produced by: *Griffo, The Great Gala of Letters*
design, art direction: Dina&Solomon
in collaboration with: Museo del Patrimonio Industriale

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Museo del Patrimonio Industriale
September 23 - November, 12 2017
Opening: Friday September, 22 h 5.30 pm

Bologna, September 1, 2017. On September 22, at the **Museo del Patrimonio Industriale** (Museum of Industrial Heritage) of Bologna will inaugurate, until November 12, the exhibition ***The Simoncini Method. In search of an Aesthetic whole*** devoted to **Francesco Simoncini**, a great innovator in the field of type design, creator of famous fonts that have been seen by millions of readers for more than forty years and are still appreciated all over the world: from **Garamond Simoncini**, used by **Einaudi Publishing** and which has become an **iconic type of Italian publishing**, to **Delia**, designed for telephone directories.

The exhibition was conceived by ***Griffo, The Great Gala of Letters***, a multidisciplinary project reviving and celebrating Griffo's story and the awareness of the invaluable tool that accompanies our daily life. Born in 2014, with a Scientific Committee composed by the top international experts of book history and previously chaired by **Umberto Eco**, with the patronage of the Municipality of Bologna, the collaboration of institutional partners as well as many others Italian and international partners and institutions. The project will have its climax in 2018 with the celebratory events for the 500th death anniversary of Francesco Griffo.

Metodo Simoncini (Simoncini Method) outlines the entrepreneurial spirit and the ability to innovate expressed by Francesco Simoncini (1912-1975), from 1954 sole manager of Officine Simoncini, a company established by his father in 1953 in Bologna, then moved to larger premises in Rastignano, which would become one of the most advanced players in the field of the design and production of typefaces for Linotypes.

Every day, we communicate our ideas through words and phrases made of ink and pixels, yet know little or nothing about the letters themselves: these extraordinary tools, their history, and the people who made them. Through the inventions and achievements of entrepreneur and self-taught type designer Francesco Simoncini, the exhibition shows the importance of a holistic approach to design, in which form and function, research and the human touch are all equally vital elements.

The exhibition, proposing an immersive and multimedia experience with a setting inspired by the layout of the type design department of the Officine Simoncini, welcomes visitors with original videos, photos and tools introducing them to the fascinating process of designing and manufacturing a typeface for a Linotype machine. It continues with the presentation of the **international patent "Simoncini Method"** and also of documents, type drawings and rare editions

retracing the contribution of Francesco Simoncini as designer. The exhibition provides an overview of the impact and diffusion of his major fonts like the already mentioned Garamond Simoncini created for Einaudi, Delia for telephone directories. Many of his types were widely used for newspapers and periodicals in Italy and abroad: among the Italian ones there are *Stadio*, *La Nazione*, *Il Tempo*, *Guerin Sportivo*, *Il Resto del Carlino*, *La Domenica del Corriere*.

When Simoncini designed types his main goals were clarity and readability, always putting first the needs of his final users: the readers. Thanks to this approach, at the time of the Linotype technology diffusion, his types were widely used in every sector of the Italian press. Some of his types, even if created for an obsolete technology, are known and appreciated all over the world to this day. He wrote: *“The readability and functionality of printed texts, for long reading sessions, is partially related today with the choice of a good printing process but mostly with the diligence with which the typeface is prepared. People could and should proceed with care. Sometimes the choices made for types and paper are not always the best and the composition and the printing are not always done carefully. [...] In each of our activities, in the graphic activity, the readers and their needs should always come first.”* (Text taken from: *Francesco Simoncini, Leggibilità e funzionalità dei caratteri da stampa*. Lecture for the Advanced Course of Graphic Culture at the Department of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Turin, Castello del Valentino, Turin, March 6, 1965).

As entrepreneur Simoncini also put into practice an innovative vision for his time, always with great respect for his collaborators and employees. With his brothers he was able to turn his father's business from a small Linotype repair workshop badly hit by the war into a large international company for type design and production.

His dedication went beyond his corporate activities: he played a key role in various professional associations and was also strongly committed in the training of young technicians and in technological standardization.

Short bio > Elisa Rebellato is a librarian. She holds a degree in Conservation of Cultural Heritage with a specialization in books/archives from Ca' Foscari University of Venice and a Ph.D. in Bibliographic and Documentary Science from the University of Udine. Her published works include: *La fabbrica dei divieti. Gli indici dei libri proibiti da Clemente VIII a Benedetto XIV* (Milan: Sylvestre Bonnard, 2008), *La Scala d'oro. Libri per ragazzi durante il fascismo* (Milan: Unicopli, 2016) and, as editor, *Mondadori. Catalogo storico dei libri per la scuola (1910-1945)* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2008). She previously dealt with the work of Francesco Simoncini in the article *“Un Garamond bolognese per Einaudi”* in *I.B.C.*, XXI (2013), pp. 12-15.

Short bio > Antonio Cavedoni is a typeface designer and typographic historian. He holds a degree in Typeface Design from the University of Reading, with a thesis titled *Typeface Designs of the Officine Simoncini: Garamond, Delia, Selene*. After seven years with Apple Inc.'s Type Group in California, he continues to work as a typeface designer in Milan.

Museo del Patrimonio Industriale

The Museo del Patrimonio Industriale (Museum of Industrial Heritage) studies, documents and disseminates the economic and industrial story of Bologna and its area, retracing its story during the XV century, the development of the silk industry until the current mechanical district of motors and automation. The museum historic core is made by the collections of the Aldini Valeriani Institute that played a strategic innovative role in the field of vocational training. Since its creation in the middle of the XIX century, this school progressively replaced the old workshop apprenticeship, already obsolete by then, with a teaching approach combining learning and know-how through theoretical classes but also through hands-on activities and practical demos

of models and machines. In its workshops were trained several generations of entrepreneurs and technicians that shaped the modern industrial identity of the city.

Among the many display sections (repairers, forgers, chemists, etc.) the one devoted to graphic arts is particularly meaningful because it illustrates the evolution of the printing technique through the platens, the Linotypes and the Monotypes on which were trained generations of young people then hired by the many and well-known Bolognese typography industry. Strongly connected to the collection, because of the same cultural roots, are the archives of the original type drawings of the Officine Simoncini, acquired by the museum in the nineties and greatly enhanced by the exhibition.

More information about the exhibition:

www.griffoanniversary.com

EXHIBITION COLOPHON

Project created and produced by

Griffo, The Great Gala of Letters

Curators

Elisa Rebellato, Antonio Cavedoni

Exhibition and catalogue design

Dina&Solomon

(Mirit Wissotzky, Manuel Dall'Olio)

Project management

Manuel Dall'Olio

With the Patronage of

Comune di Bologna

In collaboration with

Istituzione Bologna Musei | Museo del Patrimonio Industriale

Exhibition was made possibile thanks to

Associazione Amici del Museo del Patrimonio Industriale, Poligrafici Il Borgo, Fondazione Aldini Valeriani, Associazione Cnosfap Bologna

Catalogue

Ronzani editore

Curated by Griffo, The Great Gala of Letters

Museo del Patrimonio Industriale | Fornace Galotti

Via della Beverara 123 | 40131 Bologna (Italy)

Tel. +39 051 6356611 | Fax +39 051 6346053

museopat@comune.bologna.it

www.museibologna.it/patrimonioindustriale

Opening hours

from Tuesday to Friday: 9 am > 1 pm

Saturday: 9 am > 1 pm and 3 pm > 6 pm

Sunday: 3 pm > 6 pm

Tickets

Full fee € 5 | Reduced fee € 3

Free admission for Card Musei Metropolitani Bologna holders and on the first Sunday of every month

Press Information - Istituzione Bologna Musei Press Office

e-mail UfficioStampaBolognaMusei@comune.bologna.it

Elisa Maria Cerra - Tel. +39 051 6496653 - e-mail elisamaria.cerra@comune.bologna.it

Silvia Tonelli - Tel. +39 051 6496620 - e-mail silvia.tonelli@comune.bologna.it

Exhibition created and produced by



The exhibition was made possible thanks to



Istituzione Bologna Musei is supported by

