



Año 2007

Revista Circle (Australia)



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## FERNANDO POGGIO

She descends from the door of the car to the red carpet that awaits her as a swan might take to water. As she tilts her head to greet the plethora of frenzied fans, it takes the single snap of a photographer's shutter to immortalise her smile forever. Her dress? By Vera Wang. But it's the word 'award' in 'award ceremony' that is of utmost importance. It is, after all, the reason why, on music television's night of nights, all of these people are here. As J-Lo and Beyoncé size each other up and tabloid journalists spit out 'Chanel' and 'Versace' as if adjectives, does anyone ever stop to consider who designed the award itself? Enter Fernando Poggio: Argentinean aluminium designer.

Inspired by music, painting, film and theatre, Poggio looks to the ecological and recyclable medium of aluminium to transform imagined objects into real ones. His affinity for the metal was inherited from his grandfather: a worker who was able to become independent from a monopolist aluminium company in Argentina. In his family-run factory, Poggio learnt the ropes whilst working there as a student.

Poggio believes aluminium to be "the material of the future" with a sixties feel. Interestingly, he reveals that the surface of aluminium is porous enough to absorb colour through dying. This may explain the inspiration behind the frivolity of his colourful jewellery and yo-yos in stark contrast to his award and furniture design. Colour is an aspect of design that Poggio sees as fundamental in conveying sensations and feelings. In all his work, Poggio strives for "design with a high poetic content."

Poggio's pieces operate on a series of binaries: they are decorative and functional; simple and sensuous. His sofas are organic and shapely, tracing a sinuous line to complete a whole form. Each work is a statement piece, individually crafted so that it begins to take on a life of its own.

Poggio's aim when designing furniture is: "to use materials that can express themselves and have the distinct stamp of their maker." If there's anything to link his wide variety of work, it is this celebration of aluminium as a medium.

Poggio's award designs illustrate his versatility as an artist. In contrast to his practical furniture, the awards are playful and quirky, taking their subjects from objects as far-reaching as robots to tongues. His foray into the award industry began after requests from clients for awards using unique elements to deliver a specific message. His first design was for the Buenos Aires Independent Film Festival, and he has since worked for giants Nickelodeon and MTV, as well as a variety of prestigious organizations from the fields of fashion, radio, film and television, design and technology. Being a designer, according to Poggio, revolves around the ability to turn fantasies into realities. Experimenting, with new elements and new languages, is the philosophy behind Poggio's art practice. Though his designs maybe varied and far-reaching, they all, ultimately, reflect the designer's love for aluminium; a material that allows Poggio to continue his dream of "being committed to sustainability, ecology, and to a socially responsible work." ✦