

KNITTING TRADE JOURNAL

Buyers flock to Florence as Pitti Filati returns

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Florence - The Pitti Filati yarn fair finally returned as a live event with the industry's leading yarn spinners showcasing their new collections for Autumn/Winter 2022-23. *Angela Cavalca reports from Florence*

After a long period of restrictions, digital networking and reduced activity, buyers and mills clearly appreciated the recent special edition of Pitti Filati, which featured the new collections for Autumn/Winter 2022-23.

Despite the reduced space and security limitations, the eagerly awaited event showcased 78 companies in the post-industrial setting of the historic city's Stazione Leopolda. The same mills are currently present on the online Pitti Connect platform, together with other seven companies that did not physically participate in Florence.

Expectations of the exhibitors had not been particularly high initially, but there was a surprisingly positive mood following a satisfying attendance of Italian and European professionals. This did demonstrate that the opportunity to exchange information and see products in person is clearly necessary for the industry.

According to the sector's analysis from the Confindustria Moda – Centro Studi SMI, the Italian spinning industry (including the production of wool, cotton, and linen yarns) has been inevitably

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affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020 the sector recorded a 27.2 per cent decrease compared to the year before, with exports decreasing by 19.6 per cent. At the beginning of the year, however, the industry began to see a slow recovery, with contributions from the export of cotton and handknitting yarns.

The fair started a couple of days before the Pitti Uomo and Pitti Bimbo exhibitions taking place together in the Fortezza da Basso, all under the main theme "100" inspired by the 100th edition of Pitti Uomo.

Trends

The new season's trends were presented in the Research Area with a simple but effective display of knits and colours. This season's main theme "Transformer" suggests transformation as something strongly energetic, a concept inherent in life, nature, biology, mathematics, and sport. The three aspects through which the idea has been represented are the transformation of the body, spaces, and objects, as devices for everyday life.

In a nearby special area Shima Seiki presented the new experimental capsule collection created by art director Vittorio Branchizio and three pieces realized in collaboration with Woolmark. The company showcased the latest 21G knitwear and vanis e technique that joins different stitches and intarsia patterns with the possibility to also integrate weft aspects. Another special area has then been dedicated to a selection of knitwear companies as well as to the well-established Vintage Selection exhibition.



Collections

As usually Pitti Filati showcased a selection of the best producers of knitwear yarns offering high quality materials and integrating sustainable values in the whole production cycle. Durable and

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interseasonal garments are more required with the events of 2020 increasing the need to go outside and back into nature. Consumers look more for an active lifestyle, wellness and nature and therefore multifunctional looks.

Comfortable and functional knits with fine yarns as well as new volumes and thicker but light materials are also used to create fur aspects with curly, long, or wild natural yarns. Certifications are at the forefront of the collections, spinners clearly present and explain to their customers their investments and efforts, their engagement and commitment towards sustainability, from the raw material through their processing and final yarn realization.

As outdoor is increasingly important, Lineapiù has developed strong, sturdy, and rustic yarns for heavy cardigans and sweaters using cotton/yak or recycled cashmere. Ultrafine and stretch wool is back as the key player in sportswear for close-fitting, versatile, and adaptable knits with engineered details, clean and ergonomic lines. Textured, super-tactile surfaces are the heart of decorative looking knitwear thanks to mohair fancy yarns with prominent printed flocks and sophisticated rainbow nuances.

Brushed mohair fleece creates a super-soft and enveloping winter look and ultrafine or ultra-bulky lurex yarns gleam with cosmic metallic lights for day or evening knitwear. Glamorous knits and a futuristic aesthetic are achieved with metallic velvets that reflect light creating optical distortions.

Fun and joy are the spirit for the Filclass collection with blends of fibre, colors, and prints for eclectic knitwear. A mix of eccentricity and sophisticated experimentation with a variety of hues inspired by nature, which becomes a healer. Among the highlights fleece effects are developed in the wool/alpaca bouclé Vortice and with slightly elasticized yarns like Fox and Fox Unito.

Botto Giuseppe is focusing on the special Slowool Box presenting the finest cashmere also blended with wool and silk, alpaca, and vicuna yarns in different counts. The commitment towards sustainability is getting stronger and each season the mill acquires certifications, selecting partners who share the same concern for the environment to the health conditions of workers and animals. Among the new yarns are Slowool 13, made with 100 per cent superfine Merino wool 200's mulesing-free produced in limited quantities, sustainable and traceable. Etereo is a 40% superfine 220's mulesing-free wool with 30% silk/30% cashmere and Shuffle (Nm 130000) is a precious soft and enveloping blend with mottled color effects in 70% cashmere/30% silk.

Cariaggi launched the Ethical Yarn Evolution collection, a group of 12 new yarns that highlight the evolution and investments of the mill in a sustainable approach through certifications. The effort is made on different levels, and inclusivity is one of the important goals also in the production chain covering environmental care, social interests, human action and animal welfare. The focus is on certified cashmere with natural dyes and all the articles have been added the name with E.Y.E to make them easily identifiable. Among them Flanel E.Y.E 2/40 made of 80% wool - ZQ merino 14,5 my/ 20% cashmere and Fleece E.Y.E 2/12 100% cashmere, the evolution starting from the design of the article to the territory of origin of the fibers, so that sustainability embraces and involves the entire supply chain.

Implementing its commitment towards a sustainable offer of certified qualities and dying processes, the wool specialist Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia introduced the patented ECO dyes made in collaboration with VebaGreen, usually used in the cosmetic industry. These colours are safe and non-toxic, do not contain heavy metals, do not contain halogens and even allergens. With this technology we can dye with wide range possibilities even bright tones and obtain a good repeatability. The colours realized in the noble blends on cashmere-silk or wool-cashmere-silk,

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respect the parameters Oeko-Tex Standard 100 and, depending on the yarn and its composition, also the newborn Oeko-Tex class 1 annex 6. The mill developed 60 ECO-hues that it has been studying for two years. Different cashmere, wool and cashmere/silk blends offer these new, special colours, as the bouclé Igloo ECO (nm 2000) fine Merino wool/mohair/polyamide blend or the Contemporary ECO pure cashmere.

Tollegno 1900 too is carrying on eco-friendly attitude and values within its production cycle.

Based on the principle of the 3 Rs, reducing, reusing, and recycling the goal is to avoid waste and minimize the use of new natural resources. The Collection Box, which is entirely made of recycled cardboard, contains eight Merino Wool yarn families that are developed according to different certifications. Among them are the new yarns Woolcot Bio made with RWS-certified extrafine Merino wool and organic cotton, the soft and hyper light Nuage with a worn and felted look and the crêpe extrafine wool Icewool.

The evolution of the Filidea collection by Marchi & Fildi focuses on the three historical articles revisited with GOTS certified fibres. Woolcot is a blend of organic cotton and mulesing-free, extra-fine merino, while Cleopatra and Selene, both in organic cotton and cashmere, are available in a rich colour range with neutral and trendy soft shades. For high-end knitwear, Koji is a 100% Mulberry topgrade silk yarn with a transeasonal weight and stock service availability. The company also particularly relies on the brand-new yarn Ray, made of 100% Cupro from the Bemberg fibre produced by Asahi Kasei. The Marchi & Fildi main collection includes versatile yarns in medium weights that suit the seasonless trend. Among them the cotton blends, Polaris, and Phoenix, that are GRS-certified and made with the ECOTEC technology, which uses pre- and post-consumer waste to create new, superior quality yarns.

The Filpucci collection focuses mainly on sustainable certified materials, printed yarns and new textures. The mill launched a special new project of zero-kilometer yarns made with Italian wool, coming from the indigenous sheep Gentili bred in northern Apulia. Filpucci has included two items in the collection made from this material. Salentino is an extremely voluminous yarn for garments with a handmade vintage look and Altamura is for more whimsical and sophisticated looks with a very voluminous sponge effect. The mill also announced the LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) analysis to measure the environmental impact of its production. The measurement was applied to four articles from the carded collection, which have a recycled material composition of between 95% and 75%.

Lanificio dell'Olivio significantly enriched the collection with 15 new yarns. Worthy of note is the completely new family Fancy Wool with new wool and silk yarns, as well as the precious fibres such as alpaca and mohair with new accents. The focus has been on research into sustainable and low impact materials, obtaining certifications for all the categories of raw materials that are processed, from animal and plant fibres to artificial and synthetic fibres.

Biella Yarn expanded their stock service range of their best-selling yarns such as Victoria (Nm 2/30 - Nm 2/48) 100% anti-shrinkage extrafine Merino wool, 19.5 mic, and Brisbane (Nm 2/60) 100% anti-shrinkage superfine Merino wool, 17.5 mic. For voluminous and soft effects there are suited blends with GRS-certified recycled polyester such as Baltoro Nm 2/30 (Nm 2/30) made of 50% anti-shrinkage extrafine Merino wool, 19.5 mic and 50% GRS High Bulk Polyester. The collection includes a selection of yarns made with the new OTW technology patented by Südrolle Group, for durable garments with a clean and smooth surface. Among the winter proposals, there is a growing presence of RWS certified wool yarns with a stock service of selected colours.

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Events

In line with fair traditions, Pitti Filati hosted the the "Feel The Contest" five finalists. The competition organized by Feel the Yarn involved 27 young designers with each creating two knitted outfits with yarns supplied by the many companies associated with the Consorzio Promozione Filati - CPF. This edition's winner Raquel de Carvalho will have the opportunity to create her own capsule collection of twelve outfits for the Spring/Summer 2022 season, entirely Made in Italy.

A new entry was the project Pitti Studios, the new - 100% sustainable - content production service that enhances the exhibitors' proposals. Starting with just 30 cm of yarn, Pitti Immagine, in collaboration with the knitting machine company Shima Seiki and the creative studio Kerner, created a 3D animated version of the finished garment, worn by an avatar as if in a real fashion show. The collections have been presented at Stazione Leopolda and are on the exhibitors' pages of Pitti Connect .

Pitti Filati also hosted the screening of CKD Master Cube, the fashion film showing the final works and industry projects of the students of the 1st level Master in Creative Knitwear Design (CKD Master) at Accademia Costume & Moda, made in collaboration with Pitti Immagine and Modateca Deanna.

The next edition of Pitti Filati will take place from 26-28 January, 2022.