This project mainly consisted of taking a picture of a subject, which in my case was my classmate Elena. And subsequently being able to convert that picture into a much more simplified version of what was in the picture initially. This is mainly done by reducing the picture to a bi-chrome where we were then able to capture the highlights present in the picture. The method I chose to do this project with was by using vectors; this means that I edited my picture through an online application called *Inkscape* which enabled me to transform the picture in a series of vectors rather that a series of pixels.

Shapes to Forms

The first step in this project was to take the picture I was going to edit. So, the picture was taken by placing my subject, Elena, in front of a black cardboard to maximize contrast with the subject, thence using a Photo Flood Lamp (500W) to maximize contrast with the background. To take the actual picture the settings of the camera were the following: Manual, 800 ISO, f. 4.0, 1/60. Tungsten WB

The second step to my project was to edit the picture on an online program called *Pixlr*. On that program I was able to reduce the picture to black and white; I was able to do so by adjusting the brightness & contrast, hue & saturation, color balance, and the curves.
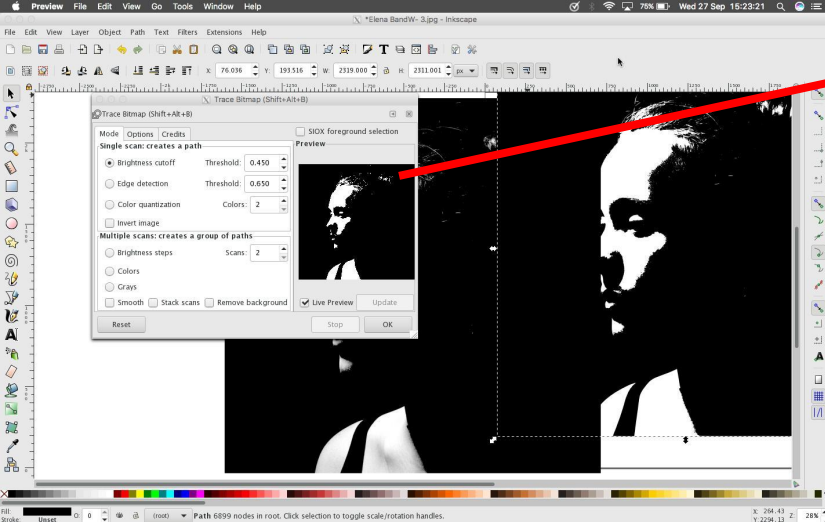
Subsequently I uploaded the picture to another program called *Inkskape*. Through this program I converted the picture from bitmap to a series of paths made up of vectors. This means that the picture has become an extended mathematical function also implying that the actual size of the picture can be enlarged without reducing its quality.
Ultimately, the last step to my project was to reduce the amount of vectors the program had created form the picture by using a tool on it (from aprx.2000 vectors to aprx.750).
Then the final result can be seen in the picture to the right:

As my first formal studio work; regardless of its simplicity i think it has been a very expressive start for what composes my body of work as a whole. Besides being a very clean work; by being a very simple set of mathematical functions composing a sequence of lines that stand parallel to a picture, they express the simplicity/pureness I look for in any artwork.
For example, as seen in the picture below, within the artwork itself there is a clash between complexity and simplicity; given by the detail of the hair and the plainness of the forehead.

Happiness

Happiness, tempera paint on canvas, 45x60 cm

Considering my entire body of work, this may be seen as one of the most effective piece in terms of visual effect. Regardless of displaying a set of simple pills with people's names on them; what characterizes this work is the ambiguity present in it. Depicting the 'named pills' fluctuating in space, this work wants to pivot around my personal need for a specific group of people, that strangely enough are able to destroy and create my actual happiness. Just like when you do and don't take your pills for when you have a headache. The creation of the work itself isn't complex, as I had to apply three coatings being of azure, prussian blue, and navy blue to create a varied effect of blues within the background, thence I had to insert the pills. To come up with the shapes of each pill I took inspiration from some images I had found on the internet, and started copying them, after painting them I then named them. To estrange the subjects from their stereotypical location I also added a series of representations of stars (the white spots) to augment the effect of both the effective value of those pills to me and to make it expliable on logic terms to why they are fluctuating. To conclude the work I then applied two coatings of glossy varnish to unify the differing textures. Ultimately, what formally estranges and unifies the work on a whole is the visual effect being created by the undefined space and depth being enforced by the background, but being drawn closer and contrasted by the individual pills all being in the foreground.

In this work we come across the ambiguity created out of something which is quite simple; twelve butterflies flying in the air. The artist, Damien Hirst, created a very sensible background resembling a clouded sky which he then covered entirely with a really thick gloss; he then placed the work in a room filled with butterflies where when they laid on the panel they would stick and eventually die on it. Besides the almost meticulously exact composition of the butterflies, as if he placed them on the panel, they are able to exemplify how for him beauty is something eternal. **As stated by the artist himself:**

"I want it to look like an artist's studio where he had colored canvases wet and the butterflies had landed in them... This idea of an artist trying to make a monochrome and being fucked up by flies landing in the paint... Then you get the beauty of the butterfly, but it is actually something horrible... The death of an insect that still has this really optimistic beauty of a wonderful thing." (Damien Hirst in Damien Hirst, exh.cat., Naples, 2004, p. 83)

Linking back to my work, much of what I have produced personally resembles Hirst's ideals even though differing in the actual outcome. A large part of my body of work aims towards an intended ambiguity which is able to augment this idea of simplicity becoming beauty. My work *Happiness* turned out to be extremely similar to the picture on the right as it had a clear setting with the subjects making the work unrealistic. Besides being retained an ambiguous artist, Hirst is to be seen as a simple artist because of what lies behind his work. In this work,as mentioned by himself multiple times he just wanted to express his thoughts about beauty; this then was enabled through an accident which occured in his studio.

Damien Hirst, Summer in Siam, 2002, butterflies and household gloss on canvas, 152 x 152cm, Private Collection

Damien Hirst
Summer in Siam, 2002

*The Earth Laughs in Flowers,* C-print, 40 x 30 cm

The Earth Laughs in Flowers is a work that revolves around the creation of a linkage in between the masculinity, and almost fetishistic beauty which can lie in a men's oxford shoe and some white roses expressing a delicate kind of beauty; in fact one would not expect to see associated with such a strong male symbol. In a differing way this work lies separate from the strict esthetic ruling I apply to many of my works

The creation of this work is to be seen as unexpected with regards to the actual aim of the work as primarily the photoshoot was executed in order to display a set of nine pictures which displayed the role of a rose with no petals in eight differing circumstances, with the central picture only being a bunch of rose petals, showing how the essentiality of an object lies in the inclusion of one detail. As the photoshoot proceed, with the camera settings being: Manual, 800 ISO, f. 4.0, 1/60. Tungsten WB lighting on a black backdrop, I tried out different possible interaction between the flowers and the shoe, mostly affected by my interest in Dutch still life composition from Baroque time (see some examples on next slide). Among others, I also made this picture which through the review process of the shoot jutted out. The intrinsic nature of the work shows one of the world's beauties in an estranged context where it is hardly seen,

The Earth Laughs in Flowers

and yet where it becomes alive, thus becoming more appealing than usual. Including both Baroque still life elements like the flowers combined with the surrealist expressivity of the shoe enabled me to re-evaluate their simplicity, and consider them as a unison, being called: *The Earth Laughs in Flowers.*
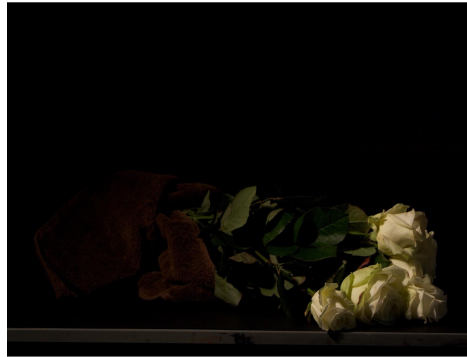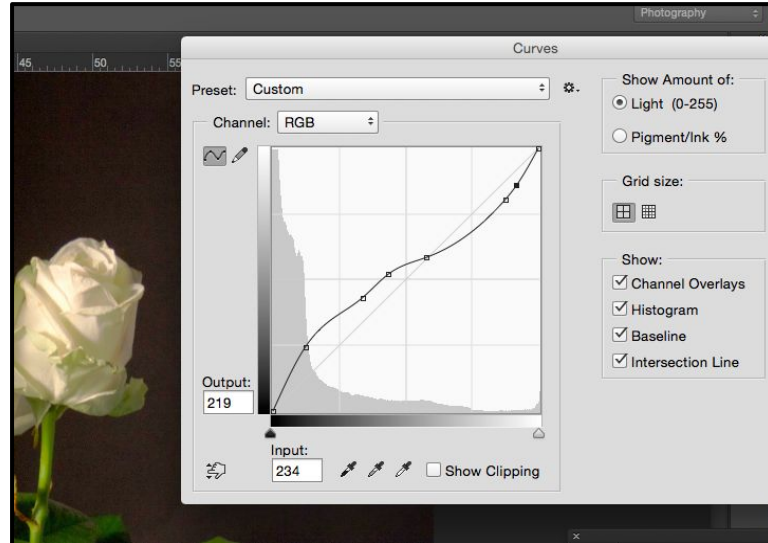
This photos document my exploration of the subject and the fascination for old master's still life paintings. The appeal of these photographic translation of those paintings is based on the Caravaggesque black background and the trompe-l'oeil effect on wich the almost monochromatic subject stands out showing a delicate range of values.

Because of the essential role of delicate values and contrast in the final outcomes, during the shooting I ended up using a diffusing screen in front of the lamp and a black cardboard preventing light from being reflected by the backdrop. The photo on the left was taken with a lot of contrast given by the close distance of the lamp and without the barn door provided by the cardboard

This was pretty successful but to achieve the pictorial effect I aimed for I had to make some ultimate refinements on Photoshop in order to control the gradual transitions between black and whites.

The main editing which had been executed was the adjustments of the curves on Photoshop Editor working on altering and defining the differing hues of white and reflections on the shoes. Hence, I also equalized the numerous blacks to have a clear distinction between the main hues and erase unwished imperfections caused by either the backdrop or the interaction of light with the subject. Ultimately, I had to slightly rotate the image within the frame and crop out the showing parts of the setting where I did the photoshoot in the first place.

Works like this and *Happiness* allowed me to properly explore my perception of beauty, regardless of not being through my prefered interpretation, being geometry, still respond towards a vision of the world which is quite often left unspoken. Yet,the usage of comparisons and estrangements are able to highlight even my subtle perceptions.

Is it just a casual resemblance of composition or ideas?

By looking at the two works being shown below, what can be picked up is the peculiar perception of beauty which is present. Through the manipulation of subject estrangement and subject combination these works replicate some famous formal solutions by referring to Hirst works and Dutch Golden Age still life compositions. Within the composition, subjects from different contexts are associated and related in an almost surrealistic way recalling associations that are similar to those used by other famous artists such as René Magritte or Meret Oppenheim. Even though I think these kind of work can take to the development of a personal expressive imagery, what interest me the most is not their meaning nor their communicative potential. The mere aesthetic connection that let them recall some icons of contemporary art is what I actually would like to investigate with my next works.

Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, 1936, fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, Cup 11 cm in diameter; saucer 23.5 cm in diameter; spoon 20 cm long, overall height 7 cm, Moma, New York

Happiness, Tempera paint on canvas, 60x45 cm

The Earth Laughs in Flowers, C-print, 40 x 30 cm

1

Origamis of Life

The project:
This project stemmed from a very simple idea; our teacher presented us an artwork, *Verblist* by Richard Serra (1967) consisting of a broad list of verbs representing actions. At that point, i selected the verb "to fold"... Hence, this lead me to the creation of a sequence of origamis

2

The implications:
Conceptually there are no implications that could lie with their project as the techniques used to achieve it are very straight forward as the idea behind it. But, actually there is one large problem, that regardless of the technical qualities this project doesn't connect to the main driving force behind all the other work I've created. What I perceive from a personal level is that it resembles a work on social structures rather than esthetics.

The idea:
My initial idea behind my choice of the verb "to fold" actually spoke to me as something i perceived from my surroundings. Just by looking around me, analyzing my surroundings, i felt as if i was folded into being the person I am at this very moment in time.

The procedure:

Step 1:
The initial step in my project was to have a brainstorming activity about what would be the best way to express folding. So, as I wrote it down on paper, i realised I was already writing on my project.

Step 2:
Cut A4 size papers in a way that they measured 21x21cm so that I could highlight that not only the same object could create different things, but that even the same sized object would have been able to do so; therefore, just a simple way to explicitly state how varied the outcome of one exact object could be.

Step 4:
The most difficult part of the actual making of the project was the making of the origamis, even though the resources were numerous. Ultimately I also realized how stressful it was to get origamis folded exactly how they needed to which at times led me to trash ten minutes of work to start over...

Step 3:
Having everything ready for the making of the origamis; I missed the essential part, the actual skills for making them. Therefore, by making use of numerous videos found online I was able to "build-up" the skills needed.

RICHARD SERRA, VERB LIST, 1967

WHY?

As stated by Richard Serra himself "Drawing is a verb". What can be inferred be such a simple statement, which also stands as a representation of this work, is that all of the works he made were to stemm off from a key (essential) idea represented by a verb which could embody actions in spatial or natural terms. As a matter of fact the list is made up of the display of 84 differing verbs, applicable in 24 different contexts pointing towards the influence or thelink there is between his works and the list itself.

The essentiality of this initial verb list lead to creations of works just by following the action ruled by the verb; which is where the artist 'submits' to the sole process and activity of the making of the work. To quote a blog of the MoMA called INSIDE/OUT evaluating the importance of this addition to their collection states:

"One of these materials was rubber. In the 1967 sculpture *To Lift,* Serra performed that titular action on a piece of vulcanized rubber recovered from a downtown warehouse. While some combinations of verb and material yielded uninteresting results, this particular outcome fascinated the artist, since the action of its making remained clearly visible in the product..."

Thus, how Serra's intention did not go beyond the simple execution of the verb

Beyond the strict purpose of displaying verbs, on the whole Serra is an artist which explored ideas regarding minimalism and the Process Art current in macro through the creation of pieces that have exorbitant sizes, yet relying in the key feature of being ruled by minimalism and external forces such as gravity, perspective, and odd usage of media. With reference to my work, there is a certain resemblance in terms of attempting to execute the action, still failing to achieve just that.

Richard Serra, Verb List, 1968, pencil on two sheets of paper, 25x22cm, Museum of Modern Art
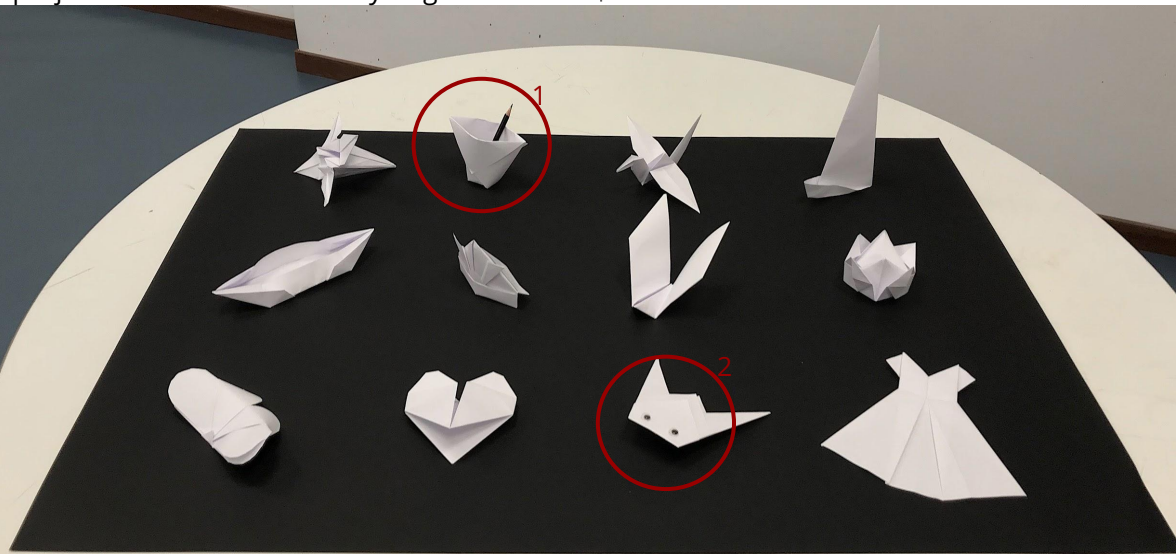
The outcome:

The final outcome for my project can be seen here;
- A dress
- A sailboat
- A flower
- A crown
- A butterfly
- A crane
- A heart
- A bug
- A bird
- A bucket
- A hat
- A boat

Out of the original 37 origamis I had made (which had a very large variety of subjects) I ultimately selected these ones due to the difference between the shapes and different lengths of the process of creating them; as some of them like the sailboat took me one minute up to ten minutes for subjects like the flower. After much thinking, the presentation can also appear very simple; but actually it is a way to create an augmented expression of the work itself

Variations:

Throughout the planning and the making of this work there was a big question; How can I present this? To me, the actual presentation of this work composed almost all of its meaning, as it took an instant to let the entire idea fall. For example, the initial idea of this project was to create as many origamis as possible to then make an installation composed of the origamis used by having them hang down from the ceiling at different levels. The problem with that idea though is that that kind of presentation wasn't able to give it its desired meaning and therefore making it seem as banale in idea and execution.

The display of this work has had many alterations as first it was intended to be a series of origamis hanging from the ceiling; which didn't allow them to assume individuality, but the opposite, as if they were a unison. After other changes like the choice of origamis, and the actual installation/positioning of the origamis I came upon the simple display shown above. Having this large A2 black sheet of paper with the twelve origamis placed on it, besides clearly separating them from each other a very strong contrast is created giving them spatial dimension. Also,, they are placed in order to give each of them their needed setting; to be an origami.

What makes them real?

What was able to give these origamis an actual presence and almost a physical volume that went beyond the simplicity of a piece of paper was the addition of three things:

1. The pencil: through the usage of a simple object such as a pencil the origami receives a purpose; the folded paper itself distances itself from the idea of being a folded paper supposed to resemble a bucket it actually becomes a pencil holder.

2. The moving eyes: its application enables the work to change its purpose from being a representation of something to becoming alive; by giving it this presence through the interaction with the rest of the moving world.

3. The display: through the arrangement and the base individuality was created...

The work was born as an exploration on texture. Thinking at texture, my thoughts immediately jumped to clothes and textiles. Besides clothing being my passion; I wanted to create a work which responded to my likings which ultimately led to the creation of an encounter between a dress and a painting, and ultimately to:

Primary

The immediate and obvious connection that can be made by looking at my work is to *Composition II in Red Blue and Yellow* (1929, National Museum, Belgrade, Serbia) made by Piet Mondrian a dutch artist which explored and represents *De Stijl* at its best. Also, this work is widely known to be reproduced by Yves Saint Laurent, a french fashion designer, which due to his passion for the fine arts; wanted to explore that in his own way. I also wanted to do so, and therefore I thought of making an artwork which was able to embody both of my passions, so why not further develop an already existing idea.

The range of materials used:
Within this studio work I made use of multiple materials to represent each color present in my installation:
- blue - velvet, (1)
- red - Chino cloth, (2)
- yellow - raw silk, (3)
- white - wool, (4)
- black - woollen. (5)

By making use of so many materials I was able to highlight the importance that lies at the heart of the assignment, the assignment; texture.

Primary, silk/velvet/wool/chino, Installation DISPLAYED IN MY EXHIBITION

The making: Creating this project had many stages; which were quite extensive in terms of planning and making. There were three main phases: the preparation, the "covering", and the assembling:

The preparation: The first step to my project was the preparation of all the measurements and the materials required. Firstly, I planned the work for two one-hour lessons because of needing to select all the materials i would use, which are the textiles previously listed, acrylic fibers, anc compressed carton. Then, basing the measurements of the painting, I tried to maintain the same exact measures found in it so that I would create a very evident visual link. The installation, with regards to measures, is simply an augmentation of the actual painting. After, I went to a textile shop and bought the necessary textiles trying to have flexibility in regards to which ones to but (which enabled me to have an extremely vast range of textures). From then on, I started the "covering".
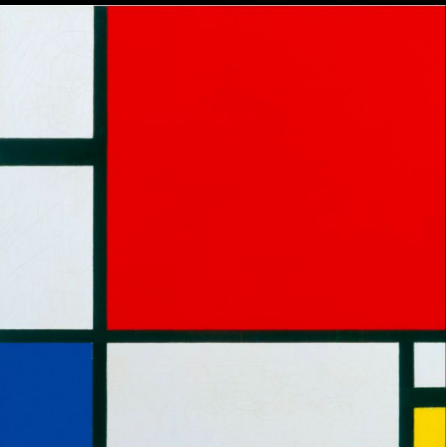
C

The covering: The covering implies the process of;
1. Cutting out all the needed shapes of compressed carton, that initially were eight, but then seven were used;
2. Cutting the textile cloths in a reasonable way to fit the needed measurements;
3. After that I applied all the cloths to the panels; and ultimately to augment the exploration of texture they were all applied in different ways:
    a. Blue: applied plainly with one uncut side
    b. Yellow: applied loosely to create a play with light (the actual cloth on the panel can change orientation as seen to the right: B
    c. White: Having three white panels;on two of them were applied planily on opposite sides showing two different patterns, and on the third one a flond was made on the panel itself to show both textures present; this can be seen to the left;C
    d. Red: applied as a cushion, which implies that a 'pocket' was made and then the panel was stuffed with acrylic fibre, this created a convex shape
    e. Black: simply applied by draping the cloth

The steps of the making:

B

Thus, what I intended to create was a visual link between the ideals behind both Mondrian's and YSL's ideals, as YSL had a passion for fine arts and Mondrian was seeking to define reality; I intended to answer to my own needs by interpreting them through their work. Hence, I achieved this through an exploration of texture.

Yves Saint Laurent was known for his appreciation of fine art; the series of these dresses have been described as a canvas on which YSL experimented with his artistic ideas. Ultimately, they can be retained as a new perspective in haute couture.

Saint Laurent, The Mondrian Collection, 1966, Jersey, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands

The canvas is small and uses only the primary colors: red, blue, yellow, white and black. The composition is similarly reduced to the simplest of rectilinear forms, squares and rectangles defined by vertical and horizontal lines. One would hardly suspect that we are seeing the artist's determination to depict the underlying structure of reality.

Piet Mondrian's work revolves around the exploration and understanding of the world in theosophic terms, through strict geometric and orthogonal ruling. As seen in *Composition in Red, Blue, and Yellow* the 'rules' set by *De Stijl* movement are fully respected, with his added concern of a contrasts which could balance one and other in the composition.
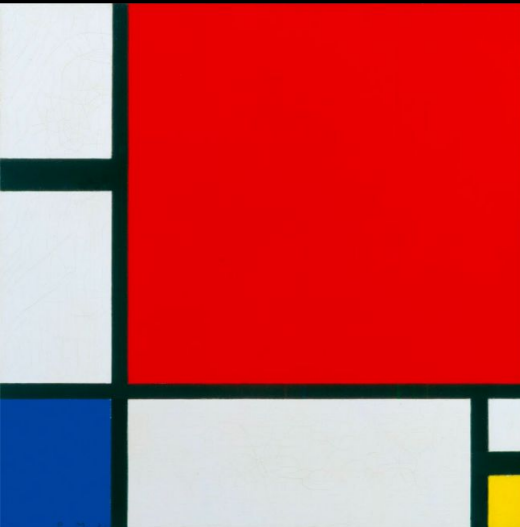
Piet Mondrian, *Composition in Red, Blue, and Yellow*, 1922, Oil and paper on canvas, 46x46cm, National Museum, Belgrade, Serbia

On the other hand, as already stated, Yve Saint Laurent's objective for the creation of such a dress was to display and furtherly explore his interest within the fine arts. The matter being created though is, how much of Mondrian's vision is reflected by YSL. Through being an arduous decision to replicate such a stiff and rectilinear structure on a shapeless sheet of jersey Saint Laurent was still able to even fulfill Mondrian's vision somehow. As the *De Stijl* movement explored the world through structures like the one presented, Saint Laurent was able to mutate them still maintaining the needed visual effect. Hence, it may even be considered how the essentiality of a structure does not lie specifically in the strict definition of the formal values but in the assertion of the orthogonal features needed to properly embody artistic currents such as *De Stijl*.

Primary Fazzoletto

Primary Fazzoletto, Ceramic and glazes, 13x18x18 cm

This work acts as secondary execution, and re-interpretation of the importance of spatial volume acting together with colors in order to create lightness. To do so the initial plan for this work included a geometric grid which would still be represented in rectilinear terms onto the organic shape of this *Fazzoletto*. **Why Fazzoletto?** The idea behind this work was developed by the Vetrerie Venini in Murano, and up to now still stands as one of the most famous examples of the Murano Art Glass production. What I attempted to achieve was the replication of such a structure, which is supposed to represent a falling handkerchief, and instead of making it out of glass I made it out of ceramic. In addition, to be able to properly handle and work ceramics I attended several workshops taught by several ceramics teachers. Thence, I assumed the restricted color palette used often by Mondrian and decided that I wanted to present this work through a trichromatic color scheme made up of red, white and black. The making of the vase itself is quite straightforward as I flattened a ball of clay into a more or less rectangular shape, thence placed a small ball in the middle and made the clay hang from from the focal point being the ball. After firing the structure in the oven though, a deformation of the modelled clay took place; I still continued by glazing it with two of the three colors (white and red), which unfortunately, just like in the firing of the clay structure itself, turned out to have created uneven and spotted areas all over the structure. And at that point I then decided to stop with the making of the artwork, and use it as a trial piece.

What points to the failure of *Primary Fazzoletto?*

Because of the partial failure in the outcome of the work I decided not to finalize it due to being extremely challenging to actually allow me to achieve my initial goal. Both the deformed structure, and the uneven coloring are just *destructive* for the meaning of the work:

Deformed Structure: The nature of a *Fazzoletto* like the ones designed by Bianconi is to appear to be a deformed, but rather fluctuating. Whilst the outcome of *Primary Fazzoletto*, initially (when actually modelling it) appeared to have such a shape, like Bianconi's, but then in the firing process got deformed. And if it would still have been finalised it couldn't express the lightness created by a grid through combination of geometric and organic structures.

Fulvio Bianconi, *Fazzoletto Bicolore,* glass, 1948-2016

Impure colour: The role played by the colour choice is vital towards the proper conceptual and esthetic outcome of the work. As an organic shape, the only method through which the definition of order and the fulfilment of Mondrian's vision would have been respected was through a reduced colors, and as a matter of fact one primary color with black and white. Yet the stained

The work being shown is a work designed by the Italian architect Gio Ponti (1891-1979) and has been produced by the italian ceramics factory Richard Ginori since its creation in 1925 up to now; transitioning from an actual singular work (as a prototype) to becoming a product of mass production.

Gio Ponti, Prospettica

With specific regard to the structural aspect of the vase:

Lip - The lip of this vase is quite banal as it is a simple border made up of a thin layers of prussian blue combined with the strong mustard tint which prevails through the rest of the vase

Neck - The neck of the vase has the peculiarity of giving it the architectural input given by the artist due to representing both pillars and bricks which are an essential part in the construction of buildings now and predominantly back then

Body - The body of the vase both represent the essence and the purpose of the vase; which is to create perspective. Regardless of the evident esthetic purpose of this part of the work, it is clear that without the specific attention given this part of the work, both the work and the name would be appear to be bland and common.

"**Foot**" - The foot of the vase, which actually isn't present, but easier to identify as the bottom of the vase is just like part of the neck, which recalls the bricks to bring out the architectural aspect of the work
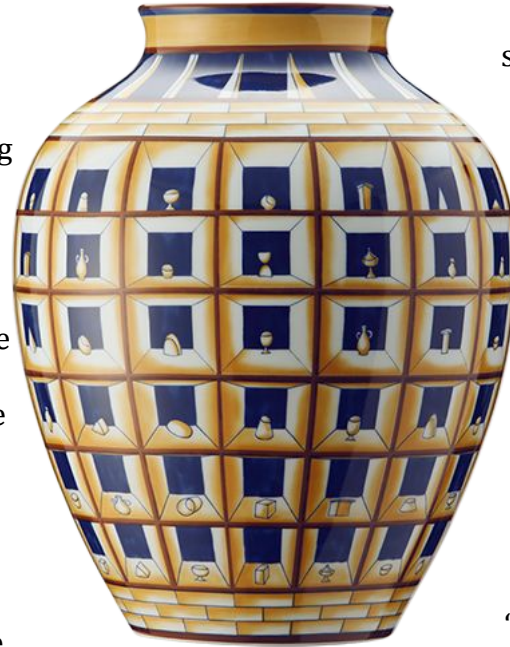
The vase itself can be retained as quite unique in its type; besides being able to make a visual link between the transition of artistic eras as it maintains the classicality of 19th century art still interpolating evident avant garde movements present in the 20th century. But the real subtleness created by the vase is how the designer was able to create imposing shapes and figures which still remain light in spatial terms. What is achieved by Ponti is the creation of a grid of "windows" creating a perspective view following the shape of the vase allowing the vase almost to lose all its volume and possible heaviness it could have in space. Besides the creation of this lightness, what Ponti then does is the application of different vases in each of these "windows" which besides augmenting the perspective view of the vase could also be present just for esthetic purposes; to shift away from the evident architectural input on behalf of the artist because of being an architect. What the designer is able to achieve at the end is what appears as an imitation, but much rather an 'unorthodox prototype' for a building in rome called Palazzo Della Civiltà, which now is the Fondazione Fendi.

By observing the vase closely we see the different vases centered in each "window", and regardless of the differing shapes they each give a differing perspective value to the vase. All the vases are repeated in the numerous rings of the vase which possibly aim towards the accurate vision of each of them with a different perspective.

The Palazzo della Civiltà can be seen as a proper embodiment of the italian *rappel a l'ordre* where there was a rejection towards the avant-garde movements of the time (1920s) and where rationalism and classicism started to take a leading role within italian art, design, and architecture.. Hence, Ponti then styled much of his works and designs from this, as shown in *Prospettica* and numerous other ceramics works made by the Richard Ginori ceramics factory.

Ultimately, the linkage between Ponti's work and 'fascist' architecture can be seen in the essential reduction of spatial heaviness of both an object or structure through geometry's visual effect at the expression of transparency. Furthermore, the inclusion of elements like objects for Ponti's vase, and statues for the Palazzo Della Civiltà endorse the illusion created by geometrical structures.

Palazzo Della Ciiviltà, Ernesto Lapadula, Giovanni Guerrini, Mario Romano, 1953
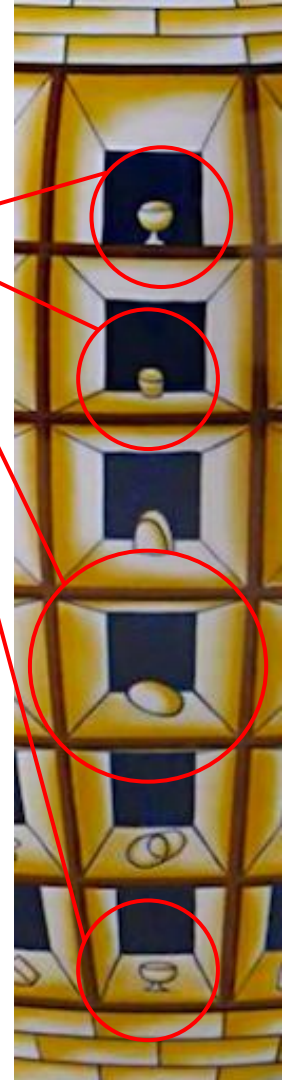
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