

IN THE HOSPITALITY OF H.E. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR

On the fifth of June and in celebration of the Italian National Day, Mr and Mrs. Granara opened their home for a night dedicated to Italian Excellence.

Lama, from **adam.eve** was invited and reports.



YOU ARE THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN KUWAIT FOR MORE THAN 2 YEARS, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT KUWAIT AND THE KUWAITI PEOPLE?

I have the feeling of knowing Kuwait for a long time now, probably because I was already here in the Peninsula, in Jeddah, during the first Gulf war in 1990. What I like most of the Kuwaiti people is their spirit of openness towards the outside world, since the time their economy was mainly based on the sea. This reminds me of the history of the ancient Italian Maritime trading powers, like Genoa, Venice, Pisa and Amalfi. I have always seen a striking parallel in that.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN KUWAIT? ARE THE ITALIANS ADAPTING WELL TO THE LOCAL SOCIETY?

There are nearly 350 Italian passport holders in Kuwait, but they can hardly be defined as a «community», as they come from different places and walks of life. Their permanence in Kuwait is linked to their contracts in the oil and gas projects for around 3 years. Among those Italians, nearly half of them are of Arab descent, previously living in Italy or married to Italian citizens.

WHAT KINDS OF ISSUES DO YOU DEAL WITH AS AN AMBASSADOR?

WHAT DOES HIS EXCELLENCY DO ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS?

My daily routine is to supervise the administrative work of the embassy's offices, to coordinate the activity of the trade and commercial section, including the promotion of events like the Italian Design Furniture Show that took place at the Salwa Theatre recently, with 10 exhibitors and 28 Italian brand names. It took us four months to prepare for this event, since we wanted it to take place on the date of our National Day Celebration.

As an ambassador, I have to maintain a regular level of contact between both governments, the Kuwaiti and the Italian. In addition to that, I work on preparing the official visit of Kuwaitis to Italy as we had the honour of welcoming the Prime Minister in November and H.H. the Amir last month. Now we are working on a couple of Italian official visits scheduled on the end of September and October.

HOW DO YOU JUGGLE BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY LIFE IN KUWAIT?

Here in Kuwait, I am living with my wife only, as our two grown-up daughters are in Europe for their graduate studies and we miss them a lot.

YOU HAVE A BUSY SCHEDULE HERE IN KUWAIT. WHEN YOU ARE NOT WORKING,



Luana Zillio, Alain Roncoletta, Federica & Enrico Granara, Massimo Caggiano and Antonella Fanelli



HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR DAYS?

My schedule is very busy indeed, and I cannot devote myself to some well organized hobbies. For this reason, I try to benefit from my free time as much as possible and learn the Arabic language in addition to the maintenance of an old Jeep (which is something I leave to others, I just coordinate their work and enjoy the rough driving).

OF ALL YOUR MISSIONS AS A DIPLOMAT, WHICH ONE DO YOU PREFER?

It is difficult to talk about a preference as each mission corresponds to a different phase in my life. Apart from Kuwait, which is my first ambassadorial post, I had a very interesting experience in Mexico City especially from a cultural perspective. Then Jeddah, which means a lot to us as our younger daughter's was born there

19 years ago and later on Chicago, a unique place to live in. The most challenging one was Maputo, my first post, as during that time there was a war in Mozambique due to some internal problems.

WHERE IS YOUR HOME AND WHERE DO YOU PREFER TO LIVE?

That is the most difficult question. In theory, it should be Rome where the Headquarters of my Ministry is located and I think that Rome was the beginning as this is where I found my way in life. Regarding our future home, most probably we will be living in Liguria (it is a 200 km Coastal Region of Genoa).

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO A PERSON WHO IS PLANNING TO MOVE TO ITALY, WHAT KIND OF LIFESTYLE HE SHOULD EXPECT?

The advice I would give to

someone moving to Italy to settle there, is to watch what many foreign residents have been doing over the last 30 years. To choose a small town in Central Italy, where life and climate are much better than the Po Valley and a location next to a provincial capital, where health care and other services are available.

SMALL ITALIAN BUSINESS VERSUS BIG ITALIAN BUSINESS, WHAT DO YOU PROMOTE?

We promote all good individual efforts, based on professionalism and innovation whatever their size is.

WE HAVE NOTICED RECENTLY THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL ARTISTIC EXHIBITIONS HELD IN KUWAIT THAT FEATURED THE VARIED ASPECTS OF ITALIAN ART. TO WHAT EXTENT SUCH EXHIBITIONS PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN STRENGTHENING THE RELATION BETWEEN ITALY AND KUWAIT?

In my view, Art is the most powerful instrument for cementing the relations between Nations and Cultures especially if it goes both ways. In fact, we are happy to assist our Kuwaiti counterparts in organizing «Al Sabah collection Exhibition» which will be inaugurated during the fall season in Milan.

THIS EVENING IS DEDICATED TO THE ITALIAN EXCELLENCE.

WHAT DO MAESTRO MASSIMO CAGGIANO, MAESTRO MEGGIATO AND VENINI REPRESENT?

Maestro Massimo Caggiano, who is here with us, is one of the finest designers in Italy. His style is very unique and quite recognizable. Besides, he is one of the most important Art Collectors in Rome. I visited his gallery in Central Rome, a year ago, and I was very impressed by the number of VIP's who were visiting his gallery too.

Meggiato came to visit us in November. Personally, I believe that his sculptures, together with those of Arnaldo Pomodoro, are among the finest I have ever seen. They show the extraordinary accuracy in the metal founding phase which is unmistakably Italian.

Venini's representative for the Middle East, Ms. Luana Zillio, is here with us and personally I find that Venini brand name represents the quintessential Murano style celebrated in the entire world.

DO YOU OWN ANY OF THEIR PIECES?

We personally own a number of Venini glasses. The Embassy owns a collection of a specially designed series of glasses that we keep on using for a limited number of guests. Moreover, the Embassy hosts one of the most exclusive pieces of furniture by Maestro Caggiano on a permanent basis.



Venini Murano Glass

“VENINI BRAND NAME REPRESENTS THE QUINTESSENTIAL MURANO STYLE CELEBRATED IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.”

ALAIN RONCOLETTA

On the occasion of the Italian National Day, H.E. the Italian Ambassador displayed some exclusive Italian art pieces in his home. They are made by reputed Italian artists. Alain Roncoletta, who represents many of the exclusive Italian artists in town and the region commented:

"This night is dedicated to Italian Excellence. H.E., the Ambassador was really counting on this event especially that we have brought from Italy some of Venini pieces to be on display knowing that Venini is the best known manufacturer of fine Italian art glass. Maestro Massimo Caggiano is also here with us tonight as we have chosen some of his very exclusive furniture in addition to some sculptures by Meggiato, who was in Kuwait recently during the Italian Art Expressions.

This event is very special and reserved to very special artists from furniture designer to art light and art glass manufacturer.

His Excellency is really happy from our collaboration, he really appreciates the fact that we are highlighting on

some artists who weren't really known in the region even though their pieces are displayed all over the world and they are very well known by international connoisseurs. I wanted with their collaboration to make them visit the Middle East and I am trying to represent them in the best way. When Sartoria Italia organized Castelli in Kuwait that was held recently in Araya Center, we brought all those ceramic artists from their small village in Italy and worked together to give them the chance to go deep in the world of trade as they don't have the capabilities to advertise. I am doing my best to highlight on those hidden artists in some of Italy's small areas in other words Sartoria Italia managed to create a smaller Italy, here in Kuwait, where you can find very exclusive and personalized

“THIS EVENT IS VERY SPECIAL AND RESERVED TO VERY SPECIAL ARTISTS FROM FURNITURE DESIGNERS TO ART LIGHT AND ART GLASS MANUFACTURERS.”



Alain Roncoletta and Massimo Caggiano

MAESTRO MASSIMO CAGGIANO

YOU ARE IN KUWAIT FOR THE SECOND TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS SPECIAL NIGHT DEDICATED TO ITALIAN EXCELLENCE. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

First of all, it is a pleasure for me to be here tonight for the second time. The event means a lot to me as his Excellency really admires my work and believes that the pieces I design are very new and unique. Second, it has been a challenge for me to be able to bring my pieces to the Middle East and especially to Kuwait, it means a lot to me. Moreover, I am really thankful to Mr. Roncoletta who is representing me in the best way and I really trust him.

HOW CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR WORK?

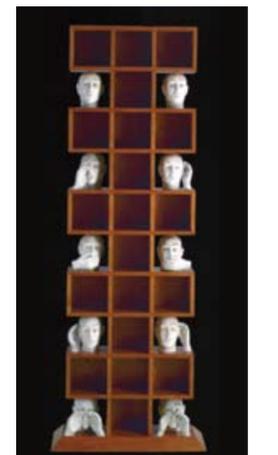
I have been involved in the world of Art for more than 30 years and I was able to found my gallery in 1993. Driven by my own increasing rhythm and my passion towards geometric harmony I started designing and creating and as you can see my furniture has a kind of mathematical aspect.

SPHERES ARE PRESENT IN ALL YOUR CREATIONS, WHAT DOES IT REPRESENT?

When I am designing, I al-

ways try to be creative and I focus on a very important thing before designing any piece. I try as much as possible to give each piece a certain calming and relaxing effect that it should give to the person who looks at it. It is why spheres are present in each of my creation. I try to play with the spheres in order to give each piece a different spirit.

“IT HAS BEEN A CHALLENGE FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO BRING MY PIECES TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND ESPECIALLY TO KUWAIT.”



VENINI REPRESENTED BY MS. LUANA ZILLIO



“OUR MAIN FOCUS IS TO PRESENT VENINI, FOR THE KUWAITI DECISION MAKERS, IN A NEW AND DIFFERENT WAY.”

VENINI IS VERY WELL KNOWN AS THE BEST MANUFACTURER OF ITALIAN ART GLASS AND LIGHTING SINCE 1921, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE COMPANY AFTER 90 YEARS?

Venini is very important and famous all over the world because in 1921, when the company was established by Mr. Paolo Venini, he started to use coloured glass and join the Murano manufacture with the design, in other words using the colour to make extremely high designed items such as vases and lighting.

THE DESIGNS ALL OVER THE YEARS ARE CLEAN, SIMPLE AND FULL OF COLORS. WHAT DOES IT REFLECT?

The color is the main point of Murano glass, so this is the reason why Murano glass was known all over the world; because the technique was only used in Murano Island. Later on, Paolo Venini decided to join the design with the coloured glass as all the pieces before were very classical and very traditional. So, when he started designing new pieces with famous designers, he felt the success of joining those 2 techniques and be-

came the first company to display, distribute and sell very unusual pieces at that time. It was the beginning of the success.

HOW CAN YOU DESCRIBE HIS PIECES?

Venini's main focus was to develop new designs, new concepts and new colours. After 90 years, we are still working in the same way trying to find new solutions, new shapes and new characteristics and match them with an old type of manufacture. You can feel through your eyes the beauty of every piece. I think that to have a nice vase is just like having a nice painting.

THIS NIGHT IS DEDICATED TO THE ITALIAN EXCELLENCE, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

It is a big event for us and we are really happy to be here. Our main focus is to present Venini, for the Kuwaiti decision makers, in a new and different way. With the cooperation of our dealer, here in Kuwait, we want to promote our company in the proper way. We want people to look at every piece as if it was an artistic piece and not only for display to decorate their houses. It is not easy but I am sure we will be successful.



MRS. ANTONELLA FANELLI



“OUR AIM IS TO PROMOTE THE BEST OF THE ITALIAN FINE ARTS IN ALL THE VARIETY OF FORMS, WHICH REPRESENT THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THIS COUNTRY.”

YOU ARE AN INTERIOR DESIGNER AND YOU HAVE BEEN IN KUWAIT FOR MORE THAN 16 YEARS, WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THIS COUNTRY?

I am an interior designer and I am the founder of Italian Art and Design Studio which is an international organization dedicated to expand the knowledge of Italian fine arts through exhibitions, programs, pub-

lications, cultural and promotional events. Its aim is to promote the best of the Italian Fine Arts in all the variety of forms, which represent the history and culture of this country, much of which already known and appreciated worldwide. I have been living in Kuwait since 1993. It is a very nice and welcoming country but I think that the only inconvenient here is the weather and especially during the summer season.

HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE MAESTRO MEGGIATO SCULPTURES?

His sculptures are really amazing. The ultimate challenge is the use of ancient materials and technologies (like the lost-wax casting of bronze), to indicate new ways and new emotions through abstract forms. Maestro Meggiato sculptures are his favorite because they reflect the experiences that a person has in his life, mostly the bad experiences that

when you manage to overcome them, you get a feeling of self satisfaction. It is also important to say that the Kuwaitis do appreciate art and I always get a very good feedback whenever we are organizing an exhibition or when we bring new pieces from Italy. We are trying our best to highlight on those artists and Kuwaitis became aware where to go when they get the chance to visit Italy in order to enjoy art in this beautiful country.