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ILLUMINOTECNICA WORLD LIGHT

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# ILLUMINOTECNICA

## WORLD LIGHT





# The light of the elements

Edited by Angelica Chondrogiannis

Adriana Lohmann, lighting designer and artist, besides her personal production, including eleven different lines, also designs for numerous production firms. Indeed, she has enjoyed important collaborations with Presotto, Doimo, Monaco, Grattarola, Fimes, Zalf/Desirée, Euromobil, Modà di Diliddo and Perego, Febal, Rossana Orlandi, R+Light, Minotti, Scavolini, SavioFirmينو, Pozzi Ginori, Phard/Zu, Edilkamin, Chicco, Yamaha, Mbk, Fiat, DuPont, Sisley, Sportmax, Breil, Baccarat, Italian State Railways, Banca S. Paolo, Unicredit, Vodafone Omnitel, Comieco, Nestlè, Heineken, Ente Fiera Vicenza [Vicenza Convention Authority] Oro, FAI Fondo Ambiente Italiano [Italian Environmental Fund], ISIA (Istituto Superiore Industrie Artistiche) [Artistic Industries Technical Institute], Pitti Immagine Firenze, Bencore and Lumicor.

She has developed diverse collections of unique designer furniture pieces (bookcases, tables, credenzas, furnishing fabrics and complements) and numerous collections of luminous sculpture, with varied artisanal techniques utilising the most disparate materials. She organises exhibition set-ups and researches design trends for the fashion, art and furnishing industries. In 2000 she won the international competition in Milan, "La Fabbrica del Vapore" [The Steam Works].  
Adriana Lohmann agreed to answer a few questions for us.

*You have a very interesting personal and professional background: born in Porto Alegre, with French-Portuguese-German origins, first a fashion model then a designer. Could you tell us, even in broad terms, how many and above all, what influences*

*your life's journey has had on your professional preparation?*  
I would say basically, in particular, my experiences in the fashion world, first as a model and then in the Vintage sector, often brought me, in a spontaneous, natural way, to review the design and materials utilised in the fashion world, for my creations: all of this without any volition or attempts to emulate already existing patterns, but rather recalling themes in contact with daily life, with innumerable forms and materials, flowing spontaneously as ideas that then, in experimentation in my atelier, express themselves in representations, patterns and functional prototypes.

*How and where do you research the materials for your creations? And what artisanal techniques do you use for the construction of your lighting fixtures?*





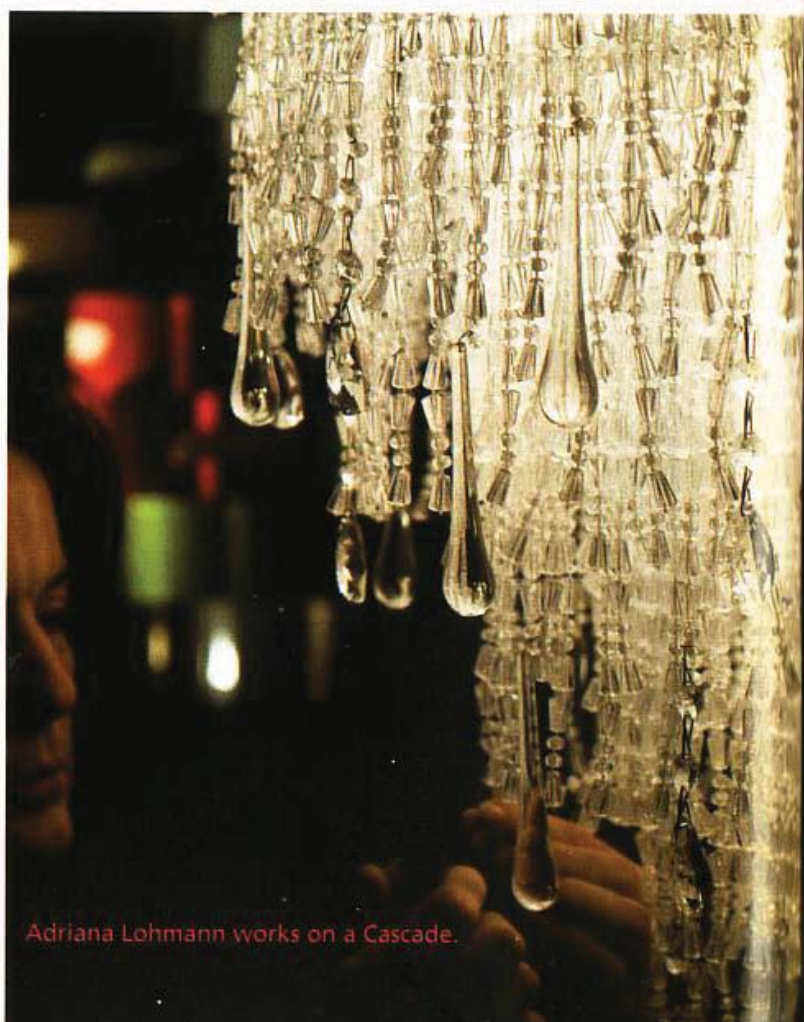
Adriana Lohmann in her atelier, next to her Goldfinger Column.



I have had the good fortune to have my atelier north of Milan, in a particular region of Lombardy brimming with top quality industries in the field of fashion, weaving and design. Visiting the local companies and being able to view the most disparate fabric samples, it is natural for me to imagine their utilisation in a different context: indeed, that of lighting fixtures. Afterwards, having selected the most suitable materials and colours for the development of working prototypes, the experimental work of "blending" begins, both of the materials and the forms obtainable and, then, of the possible variations. It is a job that consists in trials of "frameworks" of the lighting fixtures, placement of ornamentation, hooks, folds and knotting, all rigorously done by hand. Finally, the supporting structure of the lighting fixture is laid out and constructed, for the most part realised with metallic structural elements. Last but not least, different finishes and combinations are tried, both for the structure and the decorative part, so as to arrive at the realisation of a definitive model. Each creation and each new collection are made up of different recipes. I mean, it is, in a certain sense, similar to good cooking, where it's necessary to have good taste and not exaggerate with the spices that – only when used with balance and wisdom – provide "flavour" and exceptional sensations. The construction of my Lighting fixtures is always totally hand-crafted, and if not completely by my hand, each piece created by my collaborators is personally inspected by me, often embellished with that personal detail that can give it that "touch" of particular uniqueness and balance.



Melange colour cascade.



Adriana Lohmann works on a Cascade.



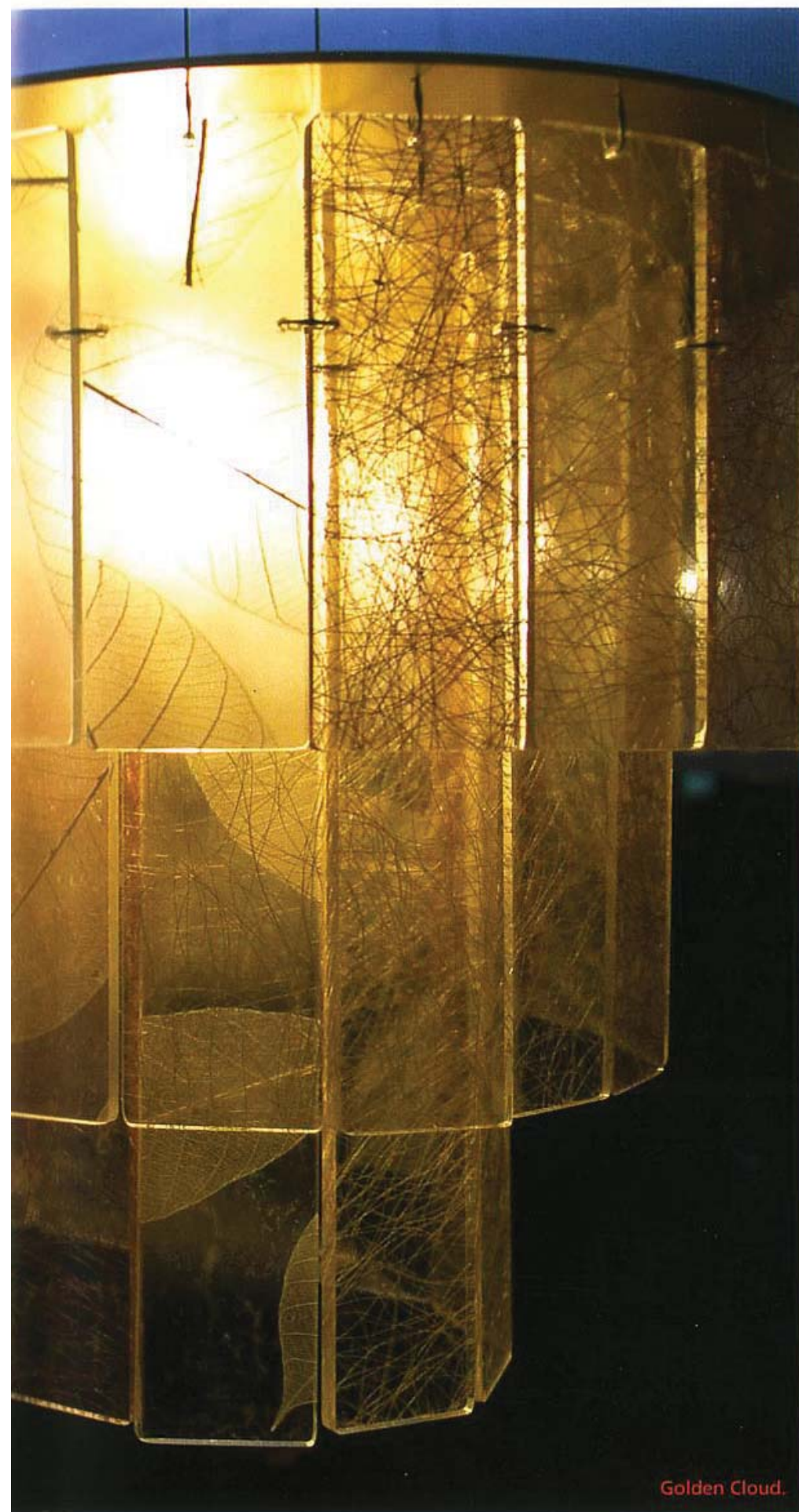


Creation of the new collections  
exhibited at the 2009 Trade Fairs.









Golden Cloud.

*You are a scholar of the re-utilisation of design. What do you mean by this concept and what are its implications?*

Inside of me there is a certain will to prolong or to “disrupt” the life of objects, of styles and of materials.

My re-employment of design re-ties itself to my experimenting with materials and to my conceptual inspiration from past design – often from sectors that have nothing to do with the field of lighting technology – and at times in an “intersecting” manner. In the sense that there are thousands and thousands of design themes and motifs, with volumetric developments that have already been tried out for decades, in the most disparate fields, so that now it is possible to interpret these in a different manner in the field of illumination, with variations on form and utilising decisively unusual materials and decorations. Or else discover that, with materials with uses that are already consolidated in other fields or else with valuable waste materials from industrial production, it is possible to indulge yourself with artistic, disciplinary or philosophical forms and concepts, never before reproduced in the realisation of furnishings and lighting fixtures. In any case – it may seem banal but it is well to affirm – a lighting fixture is conceived to arouse visual and sensorial emotions, which I try to interpret according to my taste.

*Could you briefly explain to us what the harmonisation of furnishing is and what its techniques are?*

I am from Brazil, the greatest crossroads of cultures and traditions on earth, where there are numerous mystical currents that permeate and influence daily life and that I myself, since my adolescence, have assimilated

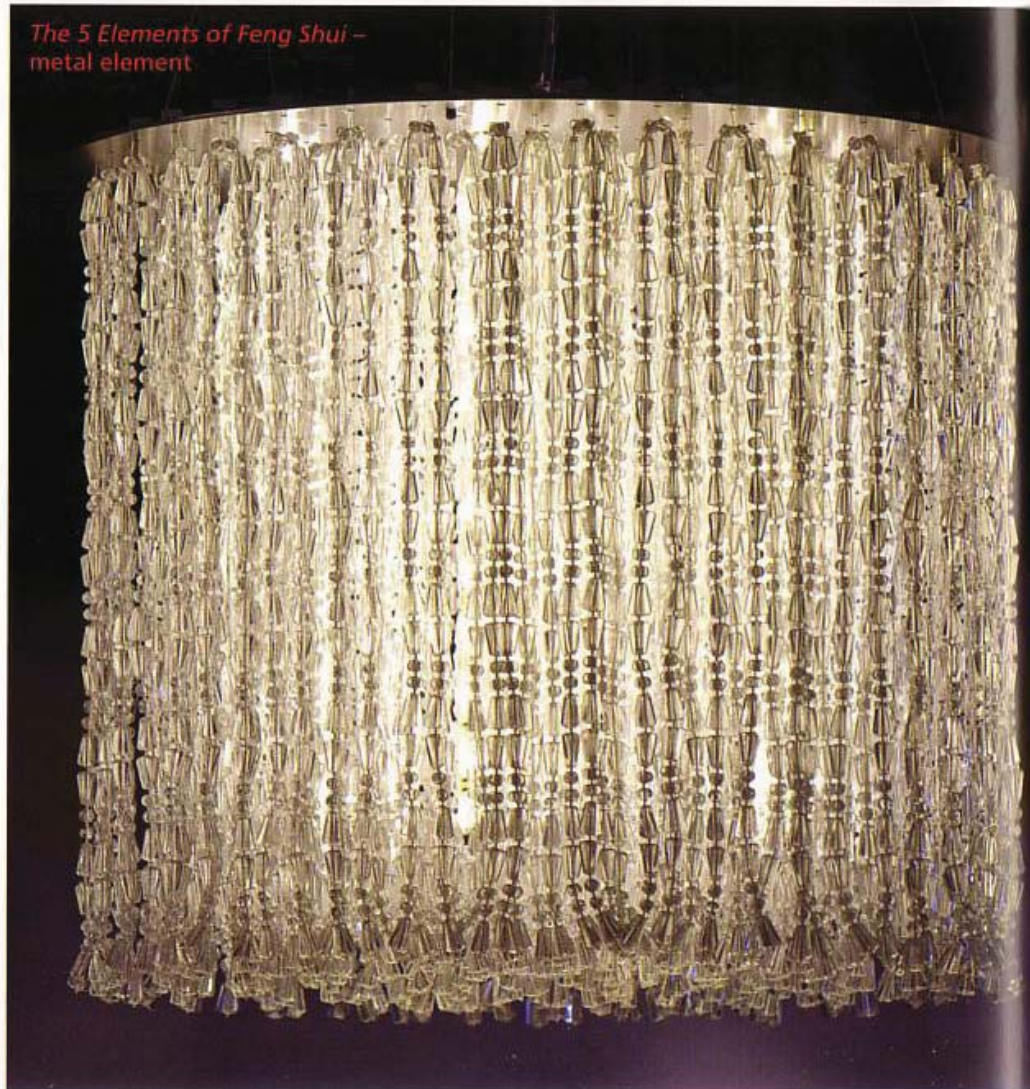


through the reading of books and publications on mysticism, chromotherapy, symbolism, cabala and Afro-Brazilian religions as well. There are numerous schools of thought on the harmonisation of environments, which range from good common sense to millenary traditions handed down for generations, to philosophies and disciplines from every continent, ending up with popular traditions and mysticism. These are “universal” principles, which must never be underestimated. Nonetheless there are those who decorate interiors with nothing more than the desire to astonish, but this practice may result in creating problems of liveability and a “psycho-sensorial unpleasantness”. To offer a simple example, actually, it is universally recognised how important it is for each room of a house to have a correct polar arrangement established, so that there can be balance and wellbeing, and that furnishing elements should be used in harmony with each specific space and relative disposition of use. A classic case of the attention for wellbeing in living is represented by the millenary principles of Feng Shui, a Taoist geomantic discipline that places forms, materials, arrangements, colours and relationships of the dynamic equilibrium of the five elements (Water, Wood, Fire, Earth and Metal) as fundamental for the achievement of human wellbeing. Besides being enthusiastic about, and a student of Feng Shui in general, I wanted to work out a collection of lamps, to be exhibited this year at EuroLuce, which encompasses the principle themes of this discipline, in as coherent a manner as possible and at the same time aesthetically interesting: interpreting the forms of the 5 elements for 5 lighting fixtures in steel, crystalline plastic pearls and LED technology.

*The 5 Elements of Feng Shui –  
Water element*



*The 5 Elements of Feng Shui –  
metal element*





*The 5 Elements of Feng Shui –  
Wood element*



*How have you linked the discipline of Feng Shui, and therefore of the harmonisation of light with the five elements, with LED technology, lights often used by designers in a “cold” and “cutting” manner?*

In the first place I consulted, from the very beginning of the design phase, affirmed Feng Shui professionals, such as architect Francesco Rossena and Mario Vitale of Feng Shui Consulting, Italy, making use of their experience to confirm and refine the validity of certain concepts and conceive of a series of forms that are very divergent among themselves but at the same time traceable to a common identity, to develop a line of domestic lighting fixtures that up until now no one has ever thought of. It was a project born with the idea of generating wellbeing, equipped with actual function and able to obtain energy savings, characterised by a design of high visual impact and an unmistakable stylistic impression. Regarding the use of LEDs, these are already widely used in the field of “technical” lighting, in particular in the form of little spots, but there are very few examples of a decorative type of application in the field of domestic furnishing, not only because of the cost of production, which is still quite high, but also because LEDs emit, by their nature, light that is pointed and directional, optically too “penetrating” to obtain the luminous softness and circularity of emissions that we are accustomed to with classic decorative lighting fixtures that use traditional incandescent bulbs. My solution for the line, *The Five Elements of Feng Shui*, was found resorting to the use of numerous rows of high efficiency LEDs arranged in series, originally capable of providing an angle of illumination of 120 degrees.



These rows were then paired in a manner so as to become double-faced, achieving in this way a natural angle of illumination equal to 240 degrees. The total circular diffusion desired – to achieve 360 degrees – was then attained by way of a special arrangement of the LEDs, which, when placed in proximity of the decorative plastic elements, with high refractive index facets, also allowed me to achieve a “soft” diffusion of the light, with a total absence of the perception of the light as punctuated and “visually blinding” typical of the greater part of the LED realisations available on the market. All of this without any reduction in the lighting efficiency, so as to conserve the objectives of energy savings and of economical management desired. The result attained with the *The Five Elements of Feng Shui* collection amazed even me, for the notable success achieved right from the moment of its presentation.

*Whoever works with light is always well aware of the impossibility and of the difficulty of the total abandonment of the traditional incandescent lamp in favour of those of low energetic consumption. On the other hand, what is your position on the use of LEDs?*

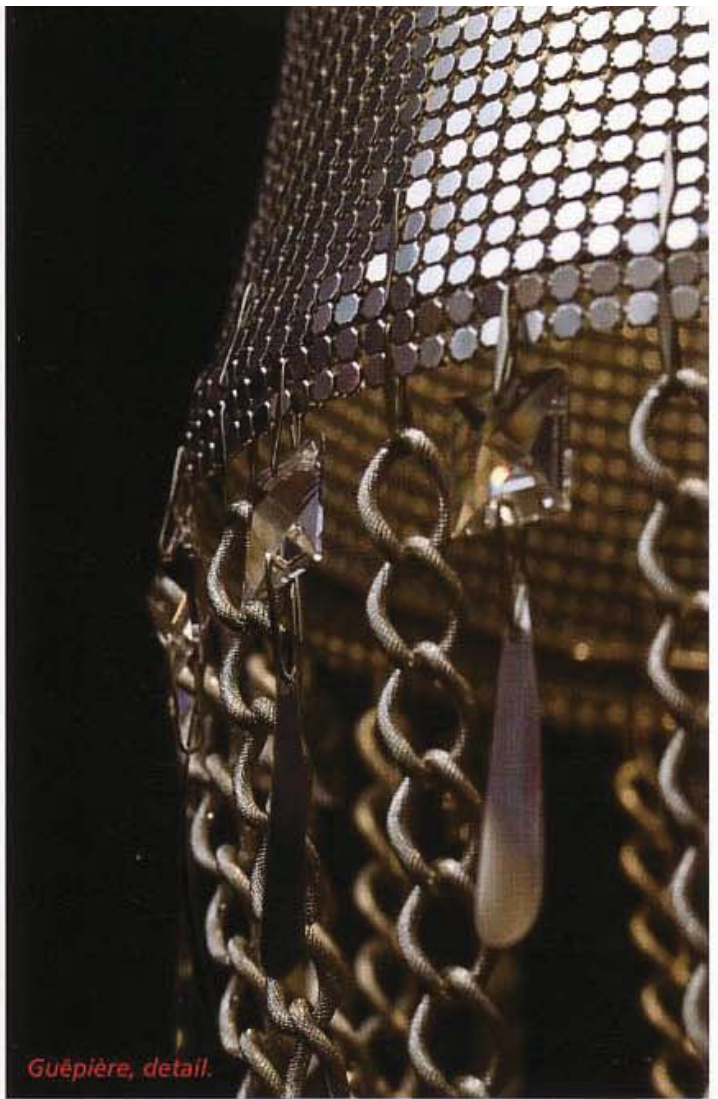
The evolutionary progress of LEDs has been watched with particular attention by all of the manufacturers of lighting fixtures and lighting technology solutions. However there are still some considerable problems relative to the adoption of the new technologies, with the forms and the structures of classical lighting fixtures, caused by often insurmountable aesthetic and functional obstacles, so much so as to discourage their utilisation. Until just a short time ago, the relationship between the quantity of light obtainable







*Narcisa classic transparent.*



*Guêpière, detail.*



*Moonraker, suspension, silver.*



and the price of LED components was absolutely out of the question. Besides, independent of the price issue, the components available did not permit the generation of sufficient light so as to render them a viable substitute for traditional sources.

Now the technical progress achieved by LEDs is such that it allows the utilisation of these solutions in the field of decorative illumination, under the condition that the technical, aesthetic and functional design approach is confronted in an innovative and eclectic manner such as in the *Five Elements of Feng Shui* collection.

For us – and for the consumer – this takes on even greater relevance when you consider that, after a reasonable amount of time, LED lamps save enough energy to nullify the greater cost of their purchase.

The future seems to be laid out, therefore, as it is now up to the manufacturers to propose not just LEDs of ever greater power and efficiency at “human” costs, but also native “multileds” at elevated efficiency capable of providing at the same time circular light diffusion at elevated emission levels per each single light source. Anyway, for most “traditional” type lighting fixtures in my collection (even if not designed expressly for LED lighting sources), I am already set up to offer a version with an LED system installed, both in my lamps equipped with a classic E27 screw-in lamp holder and in those which currently utilise halogen spots. In both cases, now, there are already LED type substitute products, which work at line voltage and so do not need a transformer or modification of the circuit.

*What relationship is there among colour, the materials, the perception of space and the*

*Casino Royale.*





Soap.



*surrounding environment? For example, what sensations do you want your Golden Cloud creation to render?*

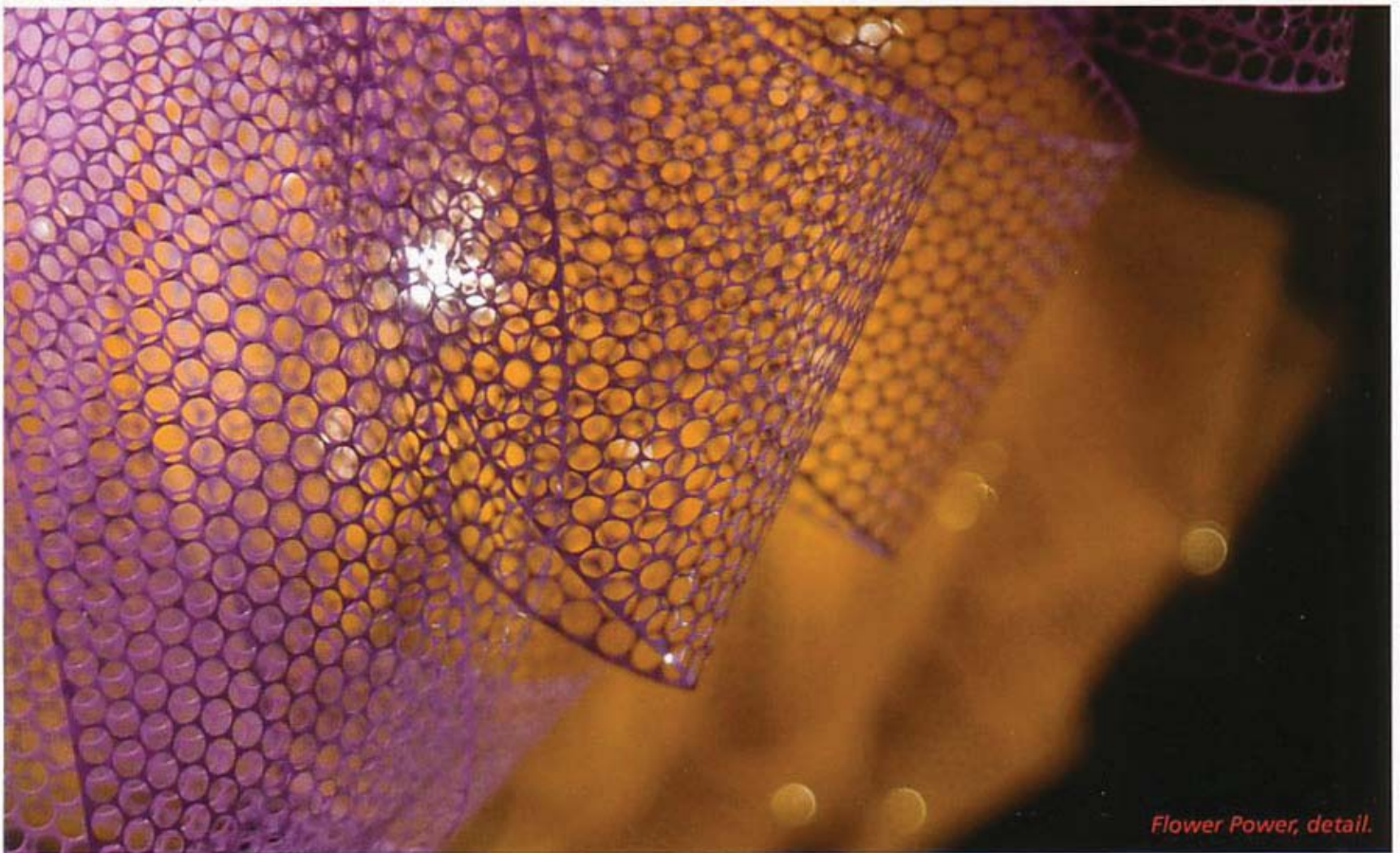
The lighting fixtures, which over the last "minimalist two decades" seemed to have fallen into disuse, have now come back domineeringly into the limelight as the main "visual protagonists" of environments, being able to strongly characterise style and atmosphere. Therefore, it is particularly important to know how to choose light sources that confer an appropriate environmental impression, with which the choices of the decor and furnishings will be correctly coordinated. Or else, vice versa, being able to carefully choose a lighting fixture that enriches the already existing atmosphere with a particular stylistic connotation. With the example of Golden Cloud that we examined, the colour, the texture and the material utilised are contributors to a "warm atmosphere", while the form, inspired by the period of the 1930s, re-proposes significant and sinuous volumes, with plays on golden translucencies. It was born to instil a perception of welcoming, that is at the same time sober and reassuring. But in the end you notice that it touches the unconscious with the image of an illustration, like the colours of the clouds at sunset.

The material utilised for the tesserae of the diffuser is called Lumicor (manufactured in the United States, it is a thermoplastic resin with inclusions of different materials, also organic ones, sunken into its interior). It offers a universe of combinations of colours and textures, in a range that is virtually infinite. This makes my imagination fly and makes it the perfect medium for me to develop innumerable themes... imagining the lamps and the emotions that will come.





*Flower Power, gold.*



*Flower Power, detail.*