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## TheOneMilano Trade Show Impacted

- The health crisis limited the number of visitors to the event, which ran Feb. 20 to 23.

BY TERESA POTENZA

**MILAN** — The health emergency that spread in Milan dented the flow of visitors at TheOneMilano, which ran Feb. 20 to 23. Not only did the lack of Chinese, Japanese and South Korean visitors impact the trade show, but also the number of Italian buyers sharply dropped on the last day. TheOneMilano closed with the number of visitors decreasing 35 percent compared with 11,165 a year ago.

"This edition paid the price of the current situation, penalized by the sanitary emergency," said the president of the exhibition Norberto Albertalli. "The Asiatic market has been strong for us in the last years" until most recently, he said. The COVID-19 outbreak affected the weekend of the trade show, which has historically been the most important, Albertalli said.

A way to deal with this situation was the Always On online platform, which was used to help Chinese companies present their collections. "We created the special area called 'Supporting China,' dedicated to those 80 Chinese exhibitors who couldn't come to Milan," explained TheOneMilano general manager Elena Salvaneschi.

To help recover some of its lost business, organizers have decided to move TheOneMilano to another venue starting from the upcoming September edition and

strengthen the links with other fashion trade shows, running at the same time as Micam, Mipel and Lineapelle, Salvaneschi underscored, starting a little earlier than Milan Fashion Week, Sept. 20 to 23.

A recent report by Micam persuaded TheOneMilano organizers that this was the right choice, as an average of more than 30,000 visitors attend the shoe trade show in Rho. "Around one-third of Micam visitors ask for a total look, which could be completed by our companies," the general manager added.

But how are TheOneMilano exhibitors reacting to the news? The most excited are leather companies, as synergies with Micam look profitable, the others appear to be skeptical and are waiting to see what the next edition will bring. Among the optimistic was Carlo Esposito, owner of Enjoy Italia. "I think the new location will bring more visitors, coming from the fairs next to us: a synergy is what Italian companies have often asked for over the last years." At TheOneMilano, Enjoy Italy featured a new collection with bold colors and a small bags line designed to match the leather collection.

Two concepts marked the TheOneMilano. "It's always winter somewhere" was the theme that inspired architect Italo Rota and set designer Margherita Palli, in a tribute to a seasonless, cosmopolitan and circular world, with huge boules de neige at the location, reminding that mountains and winter are everywhere on the planet.

Pasquale Lucarella, owner of Lucarella

Pellicce, has added a younger fur collection to the traditional line of the company: bold colors like green and blue peppered the collection, and messages such as "Love yourself" were directed to young people. "Our goal is to expand our business abroad and strengthen markets like the U.S. and Spain, Portugal and France in Europe," Lucarella said.

Lettering and bold colors stood out at Ego's booth as well. The Greek company displayed hooded fur jackets to address a young target with ample financial resources. Prints and bright colors could also be seen at Hong Kong based Michelle Fur, where Wonder Woman fur coats were among their signature pieces. "The trend we are following is about more versatile furs," explained assistant manager William Sun, the founder's son. "We aim at a new generation of customers who see furs not only as precious clothes, but also as an easy-to-wear coat all day long."

The company's target markets are Russia and China, while for the U.S. and Europe they produce for other brands. And even if the situation in Asia is very difficult, Michelle Fur sees the light at the end of the tunnel. "Our partners in China are reopening their premises," Sun added.

An effort to win over new customers was seen at Greek Estel Furs, too, where chief executive officer George Chatzisimeonidis showed new creations like Masha and the Bear furs, a limited-edition dedicated to young girls, and The Joker. These new pieces joined the main collection based

on blackglama, a ranch-raised black mink produced in North America.

On the same track was Italian family company Bruno Carlo, led today by Federica Bruno and her brother Matteo. Historically specializing in gloves, the company has adding more fashion to its line. "Pop designs and sparkling rhinestones inspire our collections," aiming at emphasizing the gloves, independently from the clothes, Federica Bruno explained. "Our goal is to give women an accessory in itself, which they can buy because they like it and not because it fits their wardrobe."

Bruno Carlo presented T-shirts made with organic cotton and removable fur. One reproduced an Albert Einstein smiling face with a fur mustache.

Craftsmanship was the other concept that marked TheOneMilano: the "Made in Italy - Making of" section brought together Italian factories and artisans and unlocked the secrets of their handmade production. Puntoundici, founded by Mary Paolucci four months ago, stood out. "I wanted to create a space for artisans, a space where we could all sell our creations," Paolucci said. "The most important thing is that we must share the same philosophy: handmade products and sustainable materials." One of the most precious textiles at TheOneMilano was a century-old textile, a combination of linen and cotton.

Dolcevita showcased a green collection with the company's own leftover textiles. "I wanted to create more sustainable processes thinking about my three children," said owner Francesca Bracalenti. "We also have a partnership with an artistic high school whose students can come to our headquarters to learn loom techniques, so we give our contribution to our territory."