

DIGNITY DESIGN. WOMEN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



A networking initiative is the core of an international handicrafts project run by the Good Shepherd International Foundation ONLUS and sponsored by the OAK Foundation and Misesan Cara, to ensure a sustainable future to hundreds of artisans from impoverished rural and urban Thai communities.

“Creating partnership among women from different countries to unleash their creative potential is key to a fair and sustainable global development”, said Cristina Duranti, Director of the Good Shepherd International Foundation.



by **Patrizia Scarzella**

INSPIRING CONCEPTS

“DIGNITY” and “DESIGN” are the concepts that inspire this new collection of fine Thai handicrafts: Dignity of women’s work and Design as instrument of economic growth and expression of the quality of the products.

First, it is the Dignity of the Thai artisans who express their skills and deep cultural ties through unique and extremely refined production techniques.

Secondly, it is the Design, the creative and passionate process developed by Italian designers, that ensures the high quality of these fine products.

Under the coordination of Patrizia Scarzella, responsible of design and communication, with the collaboration of Valentina Downey, an impressive team of Italian designers have committed their volunteer time and skills to fulfill the

social aim of this program.

They have also generously offered the usage rights behind the design concepts to the Dignity Design collection.

This constitutes an extraordinary opportunity for creative collaboration between designers and local female manufacturing skills, with the aim of making craft products intended for the European, American and Australian markets more competitive. The target market is that of young people and new potential online consumers.

A COLLECTION IS BORN

Each one of the products featured in the collection – home accessories, bags, baby items, jewellery, paper items- conveys to us the passion and pride of all those involved and it bears a very important real-world impact. It will help hundreds of Thai people weave their way out of poverty.

The collection has been designed by Patrizia Scarzella, Valentina Downey, Luisa Bocchietto, Paola Carallo, Anna Deplano, Julia Dozsa, Mikky Eger,



Daniela Maurer, Ines Paolucci. In partnership with the Italian Association DComeDesign (www.dcomedesign.org) that promotes the women's creativity and AIAP (the Italian Graphic Designer Association), a competition for the logo of the collection has been launched on June 2011 addressed to the women graphic designers under 35.

Federica Lasi, partner of mimicodeSIGN Studio based in Treviso, has been named winner of the Dignity Design's logo competition. The symbol she choose for the logo is a pomegranate. This strong East-meets-West partnership is featured by the two halves of a pomegranate, the autumnal hard-shelled fruit that bears dozens of juicy seeds. Charlotte Quitzau, Danish, is the volun-

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teer photographer author of the photos for the catalogue.

Graphic layout has been designed by Ines Paolucci.

Dignity Design Collection has been presented in January at the 'Gift Show' in New York, at 'To be Eco' in Turin and in Milan at the AIAP Gallery .

WHO ARE THE ARTISANS

The Dignity Design collection is manufactured by the Thai artisans of the Good Shepherd Sisters' centers in Fatima Center/Bangkok; Regina Center, Isan Weaving, Isan Pottery & Jewellery, Hands of Hope/Nong Khai and Chiang Rai Handicrafts/Chiang Rai.

The final price of these products reflects the non-profit mission of the partners involved.

All proceeds will be used to pay a fair



wage to the Thai artisans who have produced the crafts, to buy the raw materials and to cover retail expenses.

In two of the most deprived regions in north and northeastern Thailand and in the slums of Bangkok, the Good Shepherd Sisters run a network of handicraft production centers providing jobs to over 600 people, mostly women

from impoverished backgrounds.

The Good Shepherd Sisters are an international congregation committed to serve women and children wounded by poverty, injustice and violence in 73 countries. Their missions support local communities in promoting peace, economic justice and human rights through a fair and sustainable development.

The Fatima Center provides dignified jobs to many women living in the slums and in the government housing blocks of Bangkok. They earn enough money to support extended families of hundreds people. The women are trained in dress-making and needlework, creating stunning hand-crafted toys, baby smocked dresses, and fine accessories. The Center provides also basic education and other vocational training programs. The production centers in Nong Khai

have offered skills training and job opportunities since 1981 to the population living in the rural and under-developed area of Isan, a north eastern region of Thailand. The artisans of the Isan Weaving center have revitalized the ancient tradition of matmee which means "tied strings", making them dye resistant in order to produce fabrics used in the production of handicrafts at the Regina Center.

Holistic support is offered to people affected by HIV/AIDS at the Hands of Hope center where these artisans are employed in the design and production of unique paper products. Creative pieces are hand crafted using clay from the banks of the Mekong by the artisans of the Isan Pottery & Jewellery center.

The Chiang Rai Handicrafts center supports girls and women from the hill tribe villages in the regions of Northern Thailand, home to the Lahu, Lisu, Ahka, Hmong and Karen minorities.

These peoples don't enjoy full rights as Thai citizens and don't have access to regular education. Their young women are often forced to migrate; many end up becoming victims of human trafficking.

The Center provides education, training and income to young girls and women who handcraft fine embroidered accessories using patterns inspired by traditional iconography.