

The Pioneer - Federico Marchetti

Those who know him are aware of his moderate and sober style. However, Federico Marchetti, founder and CEO of YOOX GROUP – one of the most important online-shopping firms, which include the websites YOOX.COM, SHOESCRIBE.COM, and THECORNER.COM, and partner with fashion and design companies in their continued internet expansion – has in his essence something of the Renaissance. As did the patrons of the past, he loves the company of artists and recognizes the centrality of the arts, both on an intellectual level as well as a communication level.

Therefore, in October 2012, he launched an art section on YOOX.COM. "Since the beginning, I have imagined a world which could touch on different fields, addressed to clever individuals. Art is just an evolution of this type of intelligence which characterizes our client, who is interested in aesthetics that are more global and comprehensive than the simple fashion garment."

In regards to how the relationship between the art and fashion industry is handled, Marchetti's attitude does not follow the masses Sponsorships with a definitive end do not interest him and he does not limit his involvement to writing a cheque waiting to see his name written on a plaque. His aim is to actively participate in the creative process: "We give birth to collaborations, through elective affinity, carefully selecting the people we collaborate with and developing true partnerships. Our work consists of evaluating and choosing properly, and I must admit that having the opportunity to do so is a luxury."

It is then no coincidence that two of the most celebrated Italian contemporary artists, Francesco Vezzoli and Maurizio Cattelan, have entered his sphere of interest. The first one with a special project on yoox.com in December 2012 in support of FAI for the reconstruction of the Municipality of Finale Emilia, to which all the proceeds from the sales of the first multiple editions ever created by the artist were given. The second ("the director of communication of my dreams", according to Marchetti) in the recent project at the Venice Biennale, which involves Cattelan and the curator Caroline Corbetta.

The project is quite innovative: the works of ten young Venetian artists, usually excluded from the main art exhibition, are exposed in an atypical pavilion and at the same time their works are made available for sale at YOOX.COM. "The thing is that we as Italians, we do not only have to shoot ourselves in the foot, but we also need to admit to ourselves that sometimes there is still something excellent. The Biennale, Italy, the young artists, all this perfectly encompasses the most salient aspects of yoox.com. Bringing all aspects together is a recurrent theme in Marchetti's work.

"A common mistake is to think that anybody can do things better, instead of thinking that anybody has their own peculiarity developed through a lot of struggle, sacrifice and investments. If one worked well and tried to find synergies with others, we would all be happier, and one plus one would equal three. On the contrary, people tend to do everything by themselves, but in reality it is better to collaborate".

As the CEO of a big company, in order to balance the business-oriented features typical of that function, Marchetti needs to find time to vet his creativity. He would take pleasure in managing his own fashion brand, but believes that a feeling of neutrality should be imposed with regards to YOOX GROUP partner brands: "I am sometimes tempted, but this would harm our independence. Therefore the answer is always "no, let it go".