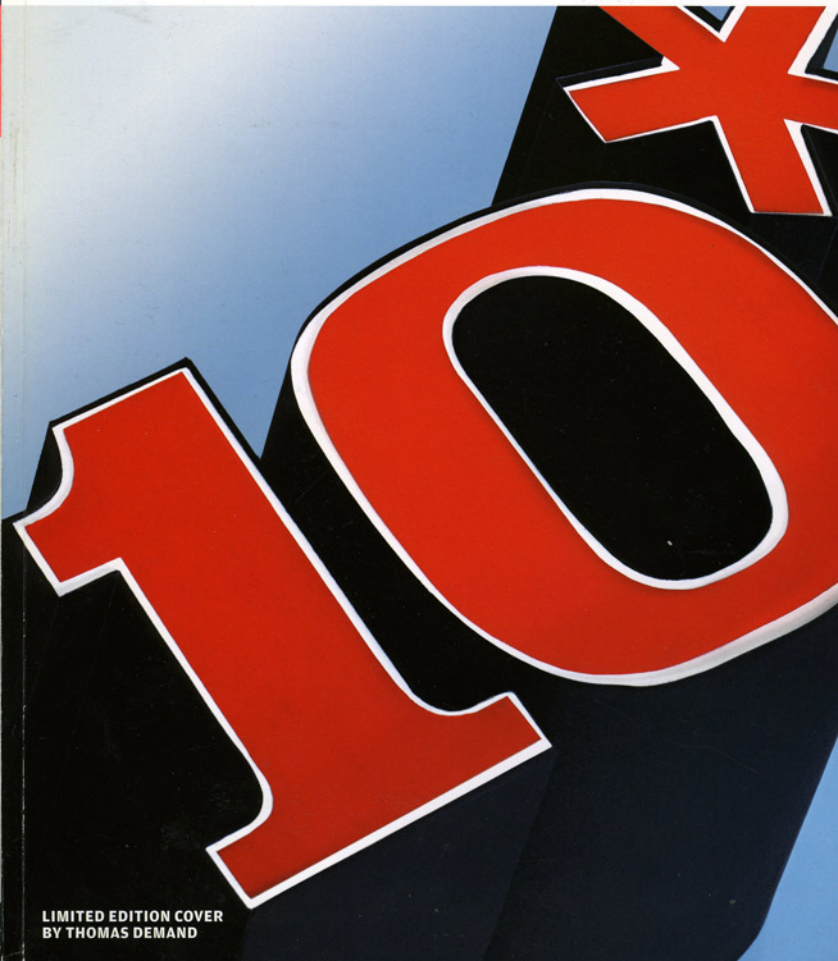


# Wallpaper\*

AUGUST 2006

\*INTERNATIONAL DESIGN INTERIORS LIFESTYLE

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## ETTORE SOTTASS

The forward-looking Ettore Sottsass is one of the world's greatest living designers. He was born in Austria in 1917 and he set up his own architecture and design practice, The Studio, in Milan in 1947. A design consultant for Olivetti, as well as being a renowned teacher and lecturer, Sottsass founded the Memphis Group in 1981 and thus sealed his reputation as a revolutionary. Named after a Bob Dylan song, the Memphis collective of designers and architects, which included Michele de Lucchi and Matteo Thun, challenged the slick black designs of the 1970s, favouring bright colours and bold forms instead. The movement, which Sottsass called the New International Style, pushed the sophisticated and influential Milanese design

world towards visual irony, puns and provocations. Just prior to launching the Memphis Group, Sottsass also set up Sottsass Associati, through which he continues to work.

### **In which year did you first attend the Salone?**

I cannot remember. I hardly ever go to the Salone. I am not interested in it – it is a market.

### **What do you think have been the main changes in the design industry over the past decades?**

It is a generic question. I could write a book on it. The 'industrial culture' has its own destiny and its destiny is 'selling' the products of the 'industry'.

**Why do you think that Italian design has been, and still is, so successful?**

The so-called Italian design is the result of the thoughts and political hopes of 'intellectual' Italian architects during the Fascist period when industry and consumerism didn't exist.

### **Do you think that there are any specific design cultures these days, or should we now be talking about global design?**

The future of global design is wrapped up in the future of capitalism, which will eventually assume the industrial culture.

### **Are there any young designers that you've currently got your eye on?**

I think there are many, many young and very good industrial designers out there. They help industries to become happy and rich.