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Fondazione Zegna

Trivero, 23th october 2009

IL LANIFICIO "ANTICO" DI ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA

Casa Zegna, Trivero (Biella) every Sunday from **8 november 2009** to **10 january 2010**.

Casa Zegna, the historical archive and cultural center, is organizing an exhibition entitled "ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA'S "OLD" WOOL MILL" in parallel with "From myth to the contemporary – Weaving life", an event staged at Castello Reale di Moncalieri.

The small but beautifully documented exhibition in Trivero – the fruit of research in the Casa Zegna archives - focuses on a project by Ermenegildo Zegna for the first "Biella Wool Exhibition" in 1936, featuring a model Biella wool mill from the 17th century that enchanted the public of the day.

This Casa Zegna exhibition includes period photographs and articles from journals (Bollettino della Laniera, Illustrazione Biellese, Arbiter, etc.) including a description by Ermenegildo Zegna himself of the "old" wool mill, a short film from the Istituto LUCE and two textile "contraptions" kindly loaned by the Museo del Territorio Biellese.

In that artisan workshop of the past, where machines were operated by the expert hands of craftsmen and the force of water and fire, Ermenegildo Zegna saw the most spectacular manifestation of Biella's textile artistry, which would even in later times, with technological progress bringing increasing degrees of automation, continue to exercise all of its discreetly luxurious charm.

But getting back to the history…

1936 was the centenary of the founding of the Bersaglieri, a corps of the Italy army. Biella, the hometown of the founder General Alessandro La Marmora, organized celebrations worthy of such a solemn anniversary.

Biella's wool makers jumped at this publicity opportunity and put on an exposition of their complex world of manufacturing, which was based mainly on highly quality products. There arose a new awareness of Biella's textile excellence.

At the beginning of summer that year, Biella thus hosted the "Prima Mostra Laniera Biellese": thousands of square meters of exhibition space in the heart of the city and over a hundred stands, mostly of local firms but also from other parts of Italy and abroad. There were many illustrious guests, giving well deserved resonance to the event.

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With at least 100,000 visitors, this local event had the impact of a big international exhibition.

Ermenegildo Zegna took part in the expo not only with his own stand (and characteristic devotion to quality in all fields) but with another, rather special initiative, a reconstruction of a typical 17th century Biella wool mill.

In this model wool mill, the Trivero entrepreneur displayed textile "machines" from his own private collection (in perfect working order), complete with employees from his factory in period costume.

He also provided a period inn where visitors could savor the "finest wines from the Biella hills".

Ermenegildo Zegna's historical wool mill was the real center of attraction for the public at the Expo, a crucible of concepts, a fusion of technology and education, of textile engineering and folklore.

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During the ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA "OLD" WOOL MILL exhibition, it will be possible to visit the Zegna historical archives and see a video on the production cycle at the Lanificio Ermenegildo Zegna.

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INFORMAZIONI
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Opening hours: Every Sunday from November 8th 2009 to January 10th 2010; entry and guided visit free of charge every half hour from 14.00 to 18.00.

The Zegna Historical Archive is open by appointment only, for groups and schools, Tuesdays and Thursdays (9.00-13.00 / 14.00–18.30).

www.casazegna.org

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dida foto allegata: Ermenegildo Zegna's "old" wool mill. Teaseling with natural teasels and manual warping. Photo by Matteo Marciandi, 1936.

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