

SIDE GALLERY

AFRA (1937-2011) & TOBIA SCARPA (1935-)



Soriana Lounge Chairs

Manufactured by Cassina
Italy, 1970s
Chrome, leather

Measurements

95 cm x 65 cm x 100 cm
37.4 in x 25.59 in x 39.37 in

Concept

The Soriana collection, created in the 70s was meant to express beauty and comfort by using a whole bundle of fabric held by a chrome-plated steel clamp. The "Soriana Chair" was the first piece designed in the collection and won the Compasso D'oro in 1969 for its design.

Biography

Key figures in twentieth century Italian design and culture, Tobia Scarpa (1935, son of the famous architect Carlo) and his wife Afra Bianchin (1937-2011) began their long career together in 1959, designing the Pigreco chair at Franco Albini's decorating course. Both of them graduated from IUAV in Venice in 1969, and they worked together on dozens of famous projects, especially in furniture design, standing out as representatives of "architecture and design characterised by elegant, refined forms and choice of materials" (Treccani). Without following the trends or passing fads, but "pursuing the ideal of a long-lasting, properly made product", Afra and Tobia Scarpa participated in the establishment of the company Flos (1960), for which they went on to design several lamps (Fantasma, Biagio, Papillona, Pierrot). The pair worked on many important commissions (including B&B, Cassina, Fabbian, Gavina, Stildomus, Veas); their armchairs, chairs and sofas include the Coronado armchair (1966), with its innovative use of polyurethane. In addition to industrial products, the Scarpas made an essential contribution "to the new need to organise and represent the enterprises of Veneto and Lombardy" (Cattaneo).