

PEN WORLD

25th
Anniversary

woo your valentine with
Pelikan's
Souverän M320 Pearl

just for you
Montblanc's
bespoke nibs

what's haPPenin'?
aPPens
from Mazzuoli

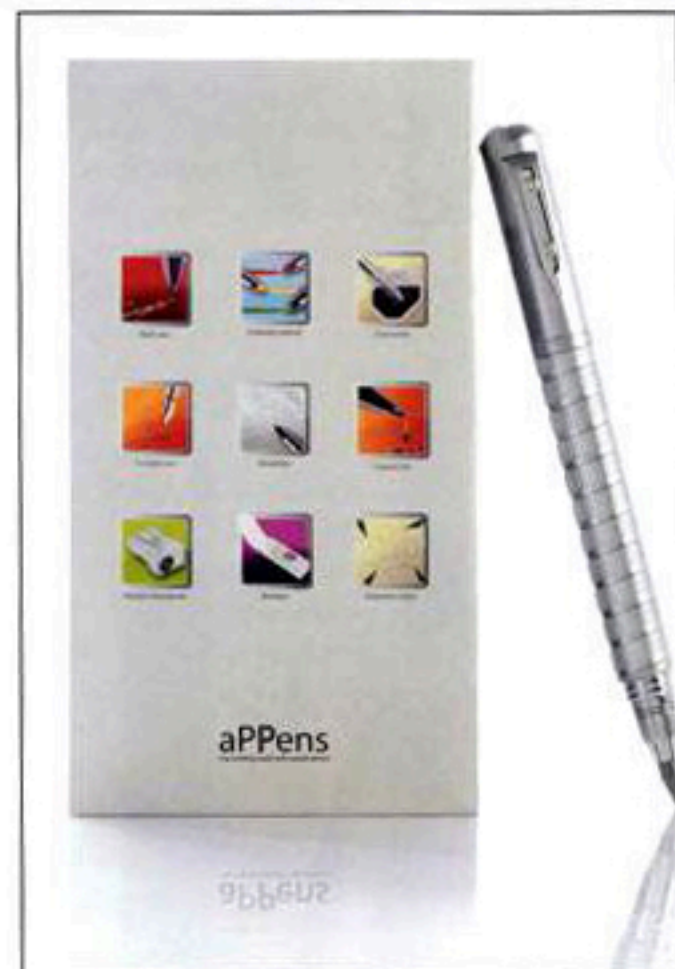
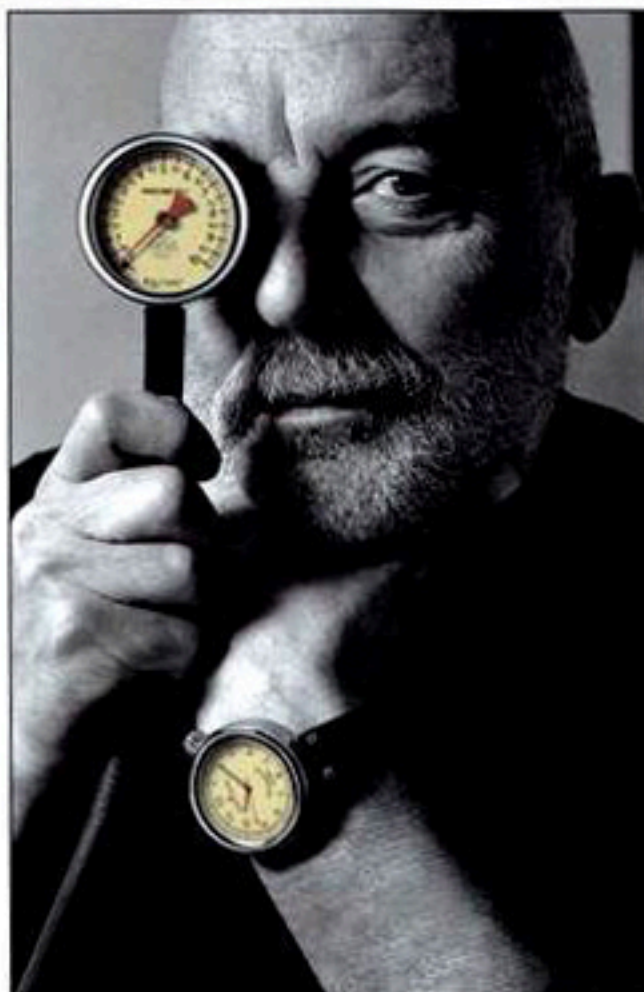
the 2012
Readers' Choice Award
nominations are in!

FEBRUARY 2012



Tools *from the* Past = Pens *for the* Future

BY BARRY ROBINSON



There's something special about the way our grandparents' influence can linger and shape our lives in frequently unexpected ways long after they are gone and we have become adults. Were it not for his mother's father, Giuliano Mazzuoli might not have become the world famous designer of pens and watches that he is today. During the early 1900s, his maternal grandfather, Renato Bacci,

built bicycles for a living in Tavarnelle Val di Pesa, a small town near Florence, where Mazzuoli still lives and conceives his unique creations. Inspired by memories of his grandfather's occupation, almost all of his pens are based on bicycle and motorcycle tools and parts, while many of his watches reflect the functionality of automobile gauges and his own passion for auto racing.

On his website, in advertising art in conversations, Mazzuoli refers to his pens as *utensili per la scrittura*—writing tools. "When I was about ten years old," recalls Mazzuoli, "I found [in my grandfather's workshop] an old wooden box with metal objects that had a strange shape. Forty years later, in a modern mechanical workshop, I saw the same objects with their beautiful shapes that still fasci-

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from top—Museo Ducati Forcella 3+2, Stelvio, Museo Ducati 1.25 Gran Sport; at right, Moka. The Moka is no longer being produced, but the Mokina, a smaller version, is currently available. It has the same shapely profile and comes with a lanyard so it can be worn around the neck.



crankshaft." Introduced in 2002, the 4 Ways is still the flagship of the Officina fleet.

The Quattro can be viewed as a cylindrical replication of Mazzuoli's grandfather's toolbox and a key to the emerging essence of Mazzuoli's work. While pens are the primary focus of this article, Mazzuoli also creates watches reflecting the analog instrument gauges of racing cars he has driven. At a time when most cars have at least partially digital indicators, the gauges in Mazzuoli's watches are determinedly analog in the same way that the watches themselves are as purely mechanical as his pens. Mazzuoli shared his passion for racing cars with his friend, the actor and philanthropist Paul Newman. Together they were planning to auction twenty-five of the award-winning limited Newman edition Mazzuoli Contagiri watches being contributed

by the designer to benefit Newman's Hole in the Wall Camps for seriously ill children, but Newman's death in 2008 placed their plans on an indefinite, but temporary, hold.

Mazzuoli's vision isn't limited to themes involving cars, bikes and motorcycles, but also focuses on—and occasionally combines—everyday objects and familial recollections. "I find it fascinating," he explains, "to draw inspiration from objects that were designed to have a function." The Moka (\$375), one of his most highly acclaimed and popular pens, stems from his memories of a coffee maker he had seen in his grandmother's kitchen many years ago. "While I was making the first drawings," he recalls, "I realized that I was designing a pen with a form identical to a coffee machine that looked like the classic 1933 Moka designed by Alfonso Bialetti."

Beyond their unique design and high quality, Mazzuoli's pens and watches appear to have a special appeal for those who already have some appreciation for vehicle components and tools. His writing instruments are distributed in the U.S. by JHD, a division of the Bromfield Pen Shop, a venerable fixture in the heart of downtown Boston. Both are owned and operated by Fred Rosenthal, who had been selling Officina products in his store long before he began distributing them. The retailer, who carries more than forty brands, explains, "Many new pens are very much like pens that are already in my store. Mazzuoli's pens don't compete directly with any other brands." Then about seven years ago, Rosenthal was invited to become the brand's distributor. "I think Mazzuoli liked the idea of a small, very traditional pen store handling the line here." And, as with