

THE  
STYLE  
MAGAZINE  
FOR YOUR  
HOME  
JUNE 2021

# ELLE DECORATION

## THE BIG REFRESH

BE INSPIRED  
BY HAPPY HOMES  
DECORATED  
WITH PASSION  
& POSITIVITY

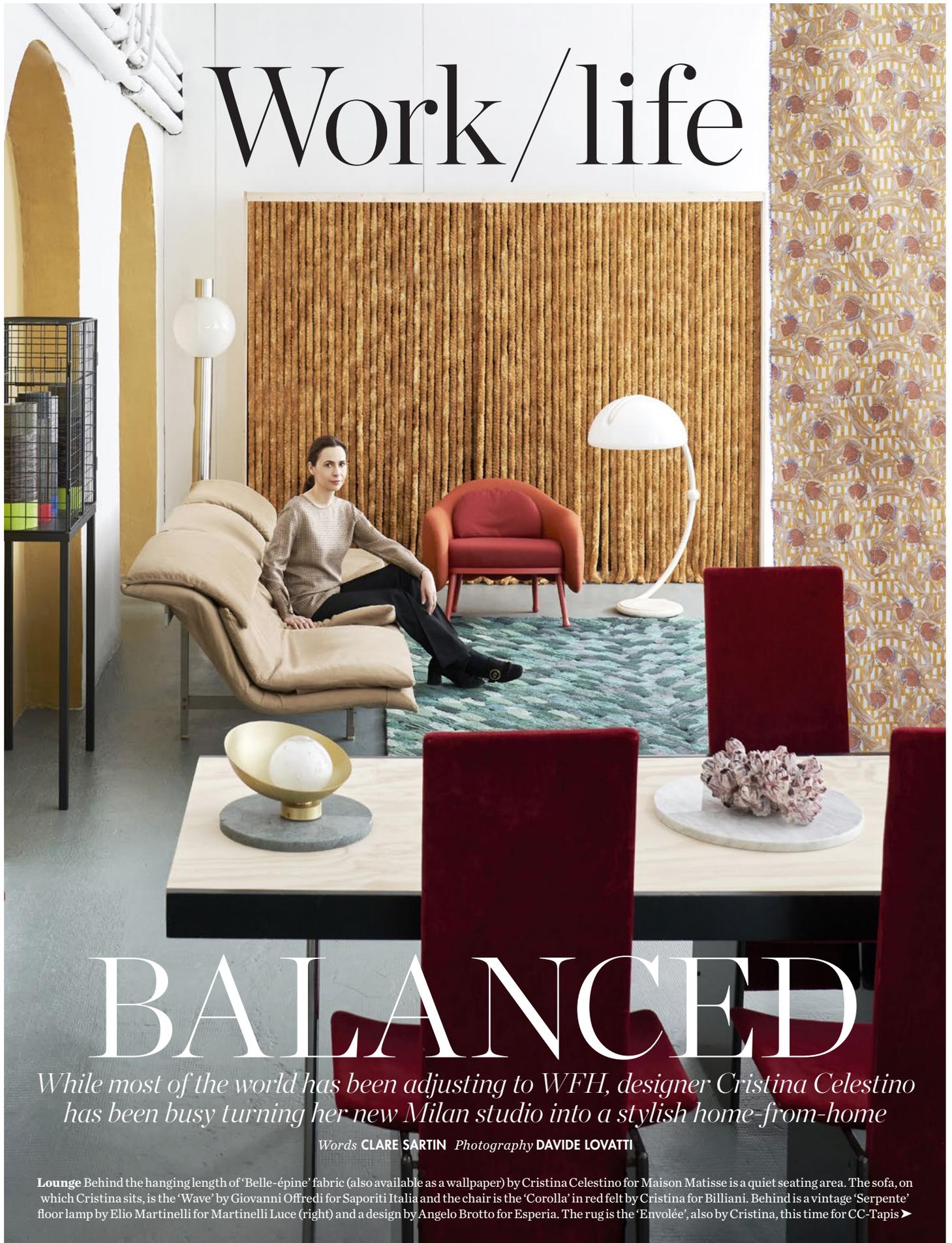
10  
MUST-HAVE  
VINTAGE PIECES  
& HOW TO  
FIND THEM

ECO MADE EASY  
The best green  
buys & sustainable  
brands to know

# STYLE IT OUT

AFTER MONTHS INSIDE, OUTDOORS IS WHERE IT'S AT,  
FROM SEXY SHEDS TO THE ULTIMATE GARDEN ENTERTAINING

# Work/life



# BALANCED

*While most of the world has been adjusting to WFH, designer Cristina Celestino has been busy turning her new Milan studio into a stylish home-from-home*

Words CLARE SARTIN Photography DAVIDE LOVATTI

**Lounge** Behind the hanging length of 'Belle-épine' fabric (also available as a wallpaper) by Cristina Celestino for Maison Matisse is a quiet seating area. The sofa, on which Cristina sits, is the 'Wave' by Giovanni Offredi for Saporiti Italia and the chair is the 'Corolla' in red felt by Cristina for Billiani. Behind is a vintage 'Serpente' floor lamp by Elio Martinelli for Martinelli Luce (right) and a design by Angelo Brotto for Esperia. The rug is the 'Envolée', also by Cristina, this time for CC-Tapis ►

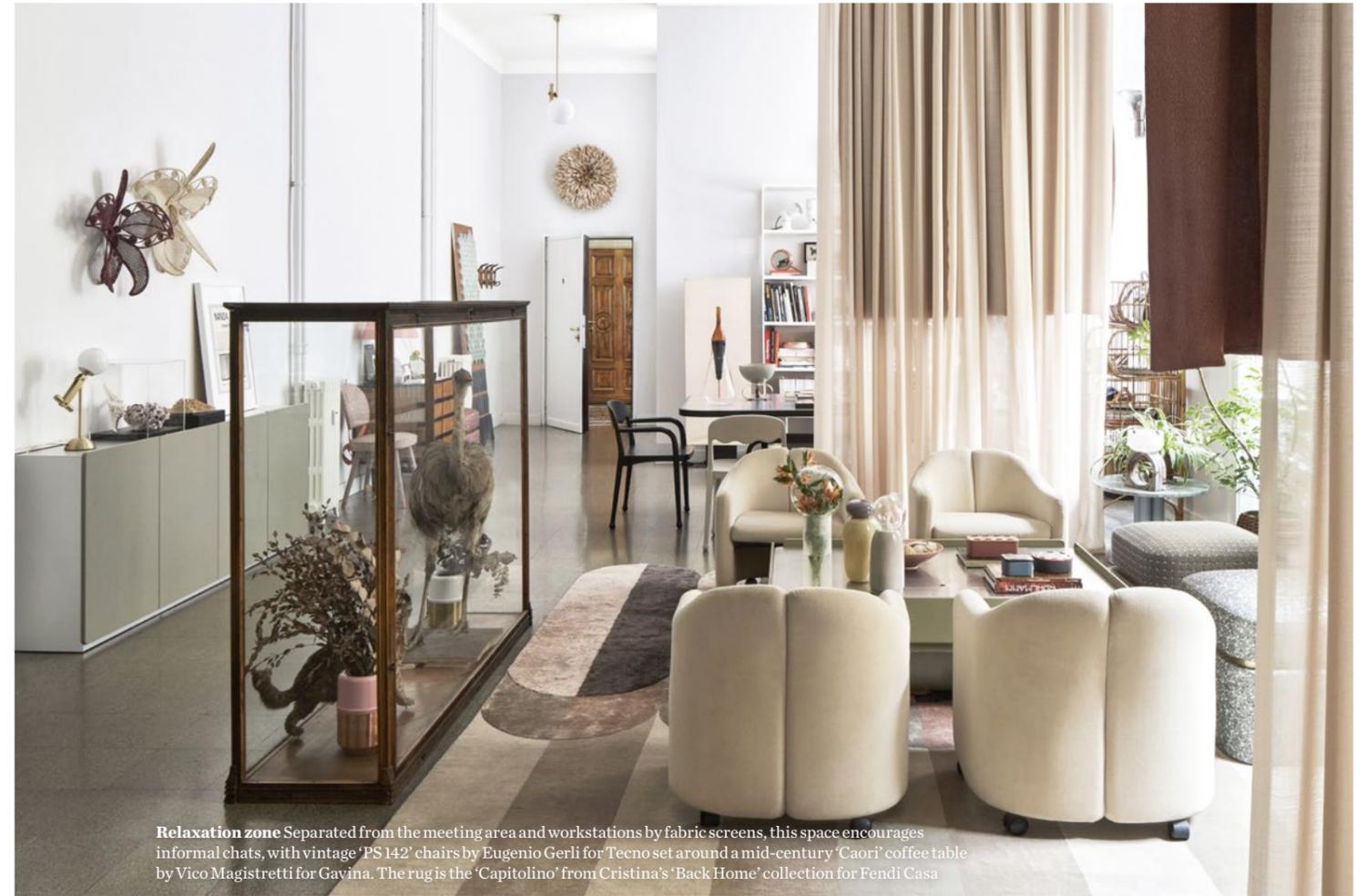


**Conversation zone (and below)** Arches painted in Farrow & Ball's 'India Yellow' reflect the colour of this building's façade. The table is custom-made, and the chairs are the 'Rennie' designed for Simon Gavina in the 1960s. On the table sit vases from the 'Miuccia' collection and (below) the 'Laguna' range, both by Cristina Celestino for Attico Design

Since starting an eponymous studio from her small home office back in 2013, Milan-based designer Cristina Celestino has always been happy for the lines between her work and her private life to be a little blurry. 'I spend a lot of time in the office, sometimes even during the weekend,' she says. 'While my daughter plays, I tidy up ideas and work with materials.'

Juggling her commitments as art director for both Italian furniture company Billiani and tile innovator Fornace Brioni with her own interiors projects, means she is eternally busy. And that's without taking into account her time creating original pieces for her own brand, Attico Design, as well as myriad other collaborations with the likes of CC-Tapis, Sergio Rossi, Casa Fendi and more. 'It is impossible to ever really disconnect,' she admits. But what some would see as a negative, the always optimistic Cristina has decided to flip to her advantage.

When, in September 2019, she began looking for a new office to accommodate her expanding vision for the studio, she made the decision to treat it not just as a place of work, but as a second home. Somewhere she and her team could enjoy spending time in. Work on the early-20th-century building in Milan's Città Studi district lasted until February last year, meaning Cristina moved in just as the first major lockdown was being enforced in Italy. The irony of turning an office into a home



**Relaxation zone** Separated from the meeting area and workstations by fabric screens, this space encourages informal chats, with vintage 'PS 142' chairs by Eugenio Gerli for Tecno set around a mid-century 'Caori' coffee table by Vico Magistretti for Gavina. The rug is the 'Capitolino' from Cristina's 'Back Home' collection for Fendi Casa



'I prefer working in the shared areas. There are so many spaces here where I can think and read'



Two circular 'Orfeo' mirrors by Cristina for Antique Mirror - available at Artemest - hang at the top of the stairs. The wallpaper on the wall panel (top left) is 'Passiflora' by Cristina for Misha

when the rest of the city was setting up desks in bedrooms and clearing space on dining tables is not lost on Cristina. However, for her, the situation was confirmation that she had definitely made the right choice. 'For creatives,' she says, 'smart-working cannot be a long-term solution. We need to see the materials and touch the samples in a welcoming, intimate environment.'

That's exactly what she has created here. Split over two levels, this is an office that's designed for life beyond the 9 to 5. On the first floor, there's a convivial meeting area - centred around a large 'Caryllon' table designed by Cristina for Gebrüder Thonet Vienna - as well as a relaxation zone where 'PS 142' club chairs by Eugenio Gerli for Tecno sit on a rug from Cristina's aptly-named 'Back Home' collection for Fendi Casa, and a gathering of workstations.

By replacing walls with hanging fabric in soft, muted shades she ensures a friendly, free flow of ideas. In fact, the only segregated space is Cristina's personal desk, which she can very rarely be found at. 'I prefer working in the shared areas,' she says. 'There are so many spaces here where I can think and read, moving my laptop from an armchair ►



**Meeting area** Ideas are discussed around the 'Caryllon' table by Cristina for Gebrüder Thonet Vienna. The chairs are the 'Frisee' by Cristina for Billiani and the floor lamp is the 'Academia' designed in the 1970s by Cini Boeri for Artemide

to sitting on the carpet.' Downstairs, things feel even more homely. A dining table defines what Cristina refers to as a 'conversation zone' and there's a cosy lounge where the team can kick back on the 'Wave' sofa by Giovanni Offredi for Saporiti Italia – which Cristina adores for its 'visual lightness' – and let inspiration strike.

Everywhere you look, Cristina's creations are easy to spot, from fabric and furniture to wallcoverings and vases, but this is not a sterile showroom. Swatches and samples are hidden tidily away in custom-built cupboards and designs are displayed as they would be in a real home, alongside vintage and modern pieces picked out by the designer, who admits she suffers from 'compulsive purchasing'.

'I liked the idea of giving the interior the feel of an urban terrace in the 1970s by combining rattan and my own flower arrangements, one of my recent passions,' she explains. 'My inspiration was the ground floor of Villa Necchi, and also the Osvaldo Borsani house in Varedo. I wanted to work on the concept of Milanese domesticity, making it contemporary, and at the same time flexible and functional for work.'

One intrinsic element of Milanese life that has been on hold for the past year is entertaining. People have been abstaining from dinner parties and drinks with friends, and for Cristina, who envisioned this place

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**Private office** Cristina is rarely at her 'Sciabola' desk by Caccia Dominioni for Azucena, but her 'Corolla' armchair for Billiani and a vintage '814' chair by Ico Parisi for Cassina make it very inviting. The screen is the 'Mirage', designed by Cristina and made by Lison de Caunes – available at The Invisible Collection – and the rug is the 'Ducale', also by Cristina, for Besana. **Below left** In the corner of the office an 'Ariosto' ottoman and 'Ravello' chair, both by Cristina for Attico Design, sit either side of a vintage sideboard. The lamp is the 'Bon Ton' designed by Cristina for Il Fanale. **See Stockists page for details** **ED**

as somewhere she could 'welcome clients and collaborators as guests', this has meant life in the new studio has been quieter than planned. 'We haven't really been able to live its full social potential,' she laments, 'but we are looking forward to it!'

As exciting glimmers of hope appear for a post-pandemic future, Cristina has been fortunate enough to discover that her way of working is perfectly attuned to these less certain times. 'I have always managed my work in a very instinctive way, without long-term plans,' she explains. 'There's a beauty in seizing the opportunities that suddenly arise day after day.'

At the moment, those opportunities include creating a new chair for Billiani and terracotta tiles for Fornace Brioni, as well

as photographing fresh pieces for Attico Design and working on interiors projects in Italy as well as further afield. And that's just the abridged list of commitments.

It looks like Cristina will be spending many more evenings and weekends in her new second home over the next few months, but it's a prospect she is facing with zeal. Indeed, at a time when many have had to reappraise how they work, perhaps she has found the ultimate solution: reimagining the office as a place where we feel safe, comfortable and inspired. A true home from home.

'I am confident about the upcoming year,' she says. 'There is a great desire to turn the page. To keep in mind what has happened to us, but look to the future with optimism and creativity.' [cristinacelestino.com](http://cristinacelestino.com) **ED**