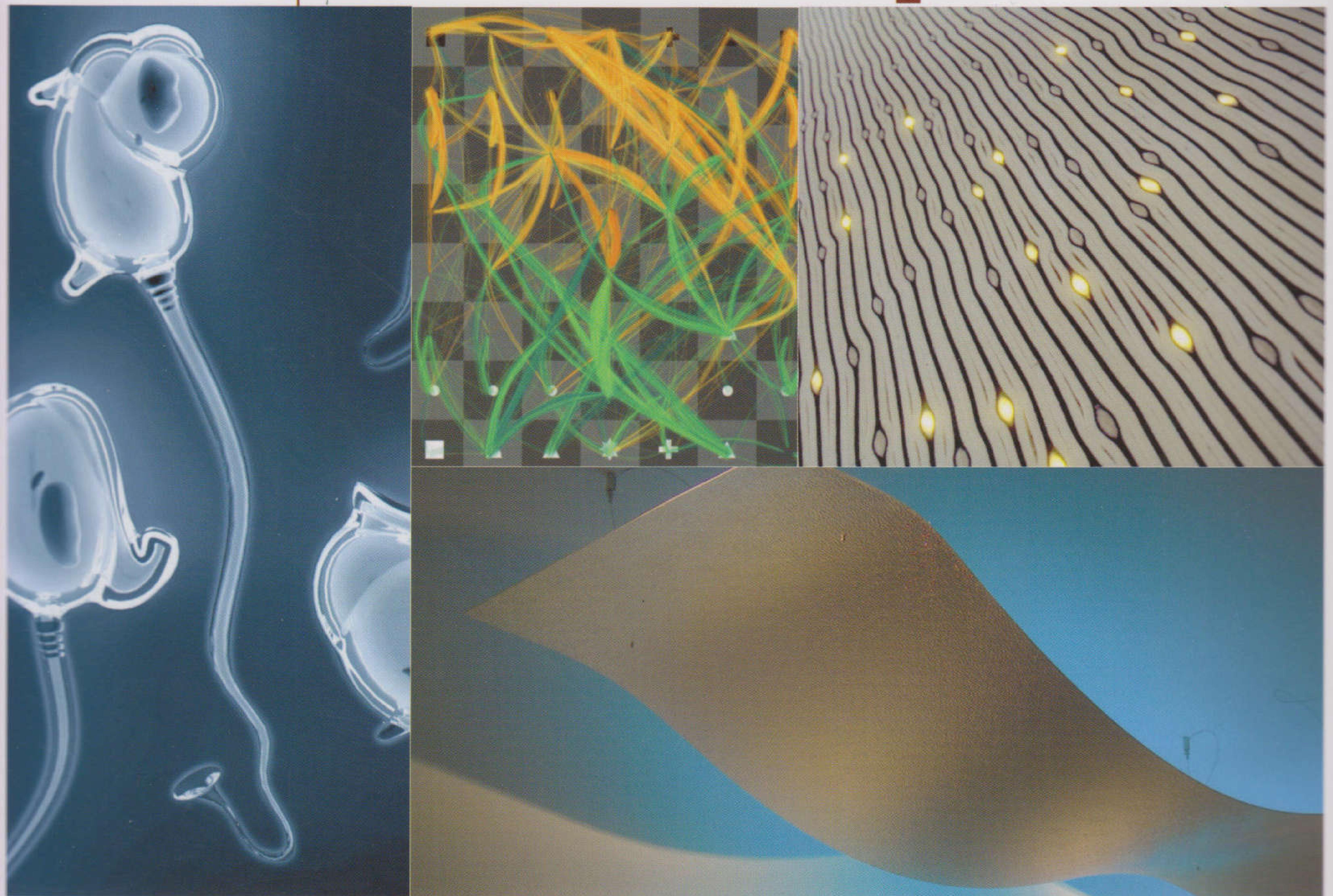


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Riflessioni sull'alluminio

Giuseppe Mestrangelo ci parla di progettazione della luce in rapporto a questo materiale

La sala riunioni nella showroom presso la sede Anofol srl, a Pioltello (Milano), con la grande onda di alluminio dorato sopra il tavolo.

The meeting room in the showroom of the Anofol srl headquarte, Pioltello (Milan), featuring the big gold aluminium wave hanging on the table.

Siamo nel cuore della China Town milanese, il palazzo è di quelli austeri ma con un interno sorprendente. Entriamo da una porta vetri in fondo a un cortile quadrato, che ci conduce in un ambiente con colonne e soffitti a volta.

Niente targa, pensiamo di avere sbagliato, di essere nello studio di un artista, ma l'occhio ci cade su un gioco di luce da una parola in alluminio sul soffitto.

Siamo proprio nel Light Studio, dove

incontriamo Giuseppe Mestrangelo, sua anima e fondatore, per parlare di luce, di riflessi e di materiali. Il pretesto è la grande onda in alluminio dorato che abbiamo visto sopra il tavolo riunioni della showroom Anofol, da lui progettata.

Quello della riflessione ci sembra sia un tema dominante dell'operato di Mestrangelo, il cui approccio ci spiega ha come punto di partenza la forma stessa della luce, prima ancora di definire quella dell'oggetto che la emetterà: "Prediamo



Considerations on aluminium

We are in the centre of Milan's Chinatown, the building is stern but has a surprising interior. We walk in through a glazed door at the end of a square courtyard leading into an environment with columns and vaulted ceilings.

There is no name plate: for a moment we fear we are in the wrong place, this must be an artist's studio, and then we notice reflections of light from an aluminium parabola on the ceiling.

We are precisely in the Light Studio, where we meet Giuseppe Mestrangelo, its founder and its soul, to talk about light, reflections and materials. We take our cue from the great wave in gilded aluminium that we saw on the meeting table in the Anofol showroom, which he designed.

The use of reflections is a dominant theme in Mestrangelo's works.

His approach, he explains, takes the shape of light as its starting point, even before considering the shape of the light source: "Let us consider for example the projector we use to fashion the shape of the light.

We define the shape on site based on the object to be illuminated, without resorting to a readymade image, then we make a hole manually, by means of simple tools we "chisel" the light. In this manner, the object comes into possession of the light, with no part of it being dispersed outside its outline.

This is the technique that we have fine-tuned for our museum lighting projects and it is an exclusive prerogative of our

studio". In this approach to light design, aluminium is part of a practice whereby this material finds application in the studies and tests conducted by Light Studio regarding the exploitation of the luminous flow; its reflecting properties are explored so that they can be implemented in different ways: in lighting design to obtain the desired mood, in luminaries that are able to combine synergistically form and function, or in an artistic concept as in the case of the Anofol project, "a huge curve that transforms an optics into a poetic object, converting it into something that has more meaning compared to a mere tool that reflects the light".

The theme of the wave can be found in some of Mestrangelo's museum lighting projects, such as the one for the Hokusai show, held a few years ago in Milan at the Royal Palace, or the Pietro da Cortona show, for which he conceived great aluminium waves, with a special texture that was able to diffuse the light and at the same time abate the heat, a factor of paramount importance in the presence of sensitive artworks such as an ancient picture.

One of the most malleable and workable materials, even in its most complex formal configurations, thanks to its intrinsic "fluidity" aluminium is also appreciated for its reflecting power, which can be enhanced by special surface finishing technologies, opening up new creative possibilities in the architectural and lighting fields, and, last but not least, the artistic field. In the

Giuseppe Mestrangelo tells us about light design in connection with this material

ad un esempio il nostro proiettore per sagomare la luce.

Realizziamo sul posto la sagoma partendo dall'oggetto da illuminare, senza ricorrere a una immagine precodificata, poi facciamo un buco manualmente, con semplici strumenti, "ceselliamo" la luce. In questo modo l'oggetto si appropria della luce, senza dispersioni al di fuori della sua sagoma. Una tecnica che abbiamo messo a punto per i nostri progetti di illuminazione museale e che è una nostra caratteristica esclusiva".

In questo progettare la luce il materiale alluminio rientra in una prassi che lo vede applicato nelle ricerche e sperimentazioni condotte da Light Studio sullo sfruttamento del flusso luminoso, dove vengono studiate le sue proprietà riflettenti da implementare in un progetto illuminotecnico per ottenere il mood desiderato, o ancora in apparecchi illuminanti che sappiano unire sinergicamente forma e funzione, oppure per un concept artistico come nel progetto per Anofol, "una grande curva

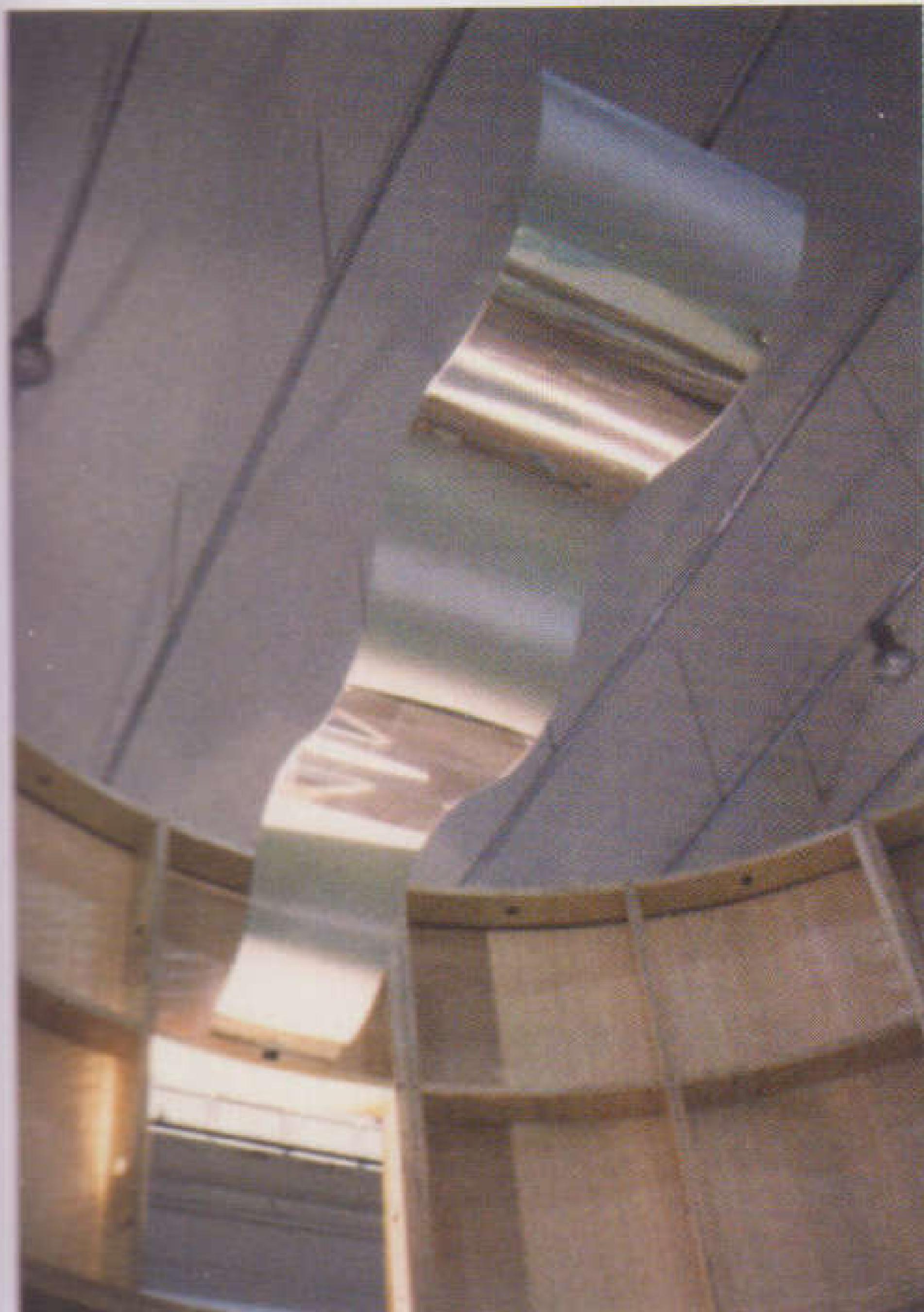
che rende poetica un'ottica, trasformandola in qualche cosa con un significato in più rispetto a un mero strumento per riflettere della luce".

Un tema, quello dell'onda, che troviamo in alcuni progetti di illuminazione museale, come quello per la mostra di Hokusai, tenutasi qualche anno fa a Milano a Palazzo Reale, o in quella di Pietro da Cortona, per la quale Mestrangelo aveva pensato a grandi onde in alluminio con una speciale texture in grado di diffondere la luce e di abbattere contemporaneamente il calore, fattore questo fondamentale in presenza di opere d'arte sensibili come un quadro antico.

Materiale fra i più facilmente malleabili e lavorabili, anche nelle più complesse tipologie formali grazie alla sua intrinseca "fluidità", è altresì interessante per le sue proprietà riflettenti, esaltate da speciali tecnologie di finitura superficiale che hanno aperto nuove possibilità creative nelle applicazioni in campo architettonico, illuminotecnico e, non ultimo, appunto arti-

Qui sotto: dettaglio dell'allestimento per la mostra dedicata al pittore giapponese Hokusai, Palazzo Reale, Milano, 2004; a destra: l'onda della sala riunioni Anofol.

Here below: detail of the setting up of the exhibition devoted to the Japanese painter Hokusai, Palazzo Reale, Milan, 2004; at right: the wave of the Anofol meeting room.





Pareti rivestite di alluminio ed elemento a onda a soffitto, sempre in alluminio, per la showroom Anofol.

Aluminium covered walls and aluminium wave fitting on the ceiling for the Anofol showroom.

field of architecture, a reflecting material such as aluminium may be used to expand space, for instance aboard a yacht. But to go beyond, as we may logically expect from a provocative, innovative artist, Mestrangelo conceives a home entirely covered with reflecting aluminium, a project more daring even than that of the Anofol showroom, whose rooms were already covered with satin-finish aluminium, a project that verges on the artwork: "a home fully mirrored, that loses its spatial materiality to assume a multidimensional quality, exalt-

ed by a thousand reflections, a thousand replicates of each and everything we place in its space, whether people or objects. And it pleases me to think that this object could be Caravaggio's "Basket", the revenge of chiaroscuro in a space where it has been erased by the interplay of reflections". "A master at this game of amazing, dematerialising reflections is Anish Kapoor", points out Mestrangelo, "who has exploited this potential to wipe out the two-dimensionality of a surface and give us an impression of being able to walk right into it, as in the great mirror

installation he displayed last year at the Fortuny Palace in Venice, during the Biennale". Aluminium as a material that reflects and makes us reflect on the design of luminaries, where it has become virtually irreplaceable in the creation of optics for high-tech light sources in order to make optimal use of the light emitted and to define its direction.

And yet, it can also serve as a material to create objects where light becomes conceptual, a message rather than a function, as in the case of "Lady Lux", one of the few serial creations by Light Studio, whose golden reflecting metal shade is the luminous head of a body covered with silk velvet, the material which, by contrast, is best able to entrap the light. At this point, while we talk to Mestrangelo, our gaze returns to the parabola overhead, that reflects light that comes out from a hole in the table and is originated by something hidden underneath.

A perfectly defined beam, unwavering, a light modelled into the desired shape, as Mestrangelo explained before.

A creation made possible, let us stress this point again, thanks to aluminium.

Photos: Light Studio courtesy.