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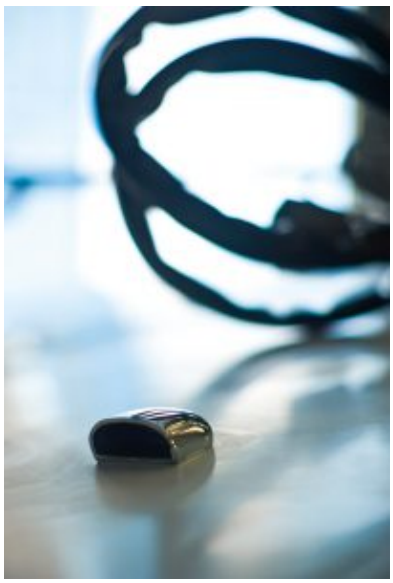
Guidi, the beauty others cannot see
LINK

Art and industry are not necessarily strange bedfellows, as proven by the passion Guidi has for beauty and its aim to promote artists from all over the world

by Luca Sordelli, photo by Jill Mathis

They make **filters, valves and accessories for boats, with a catalogue of 4,200 items** for the 'invisible' part of the sailing world, the part located in the engine room or below the waterline. They are one of the world's leading companies in the sector, with every single product made in Italy, and they have a passion for art. Meet the **Guidi**: dad **Bruno**, the founder, and his children **Daniele** and **Alessandro**, quality manager and head of design respectively.

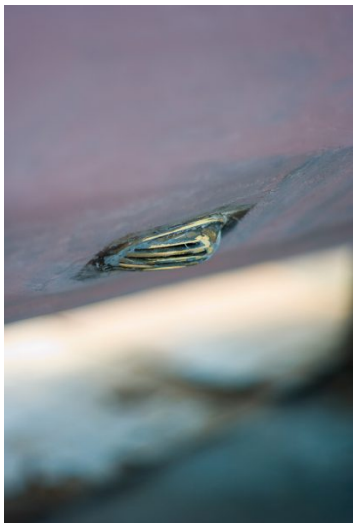
They are based in **Grignasco, at the foot of Monte Rosa** in the Valsesia district of Piedmont. They have **50 years** of technological research and investment behind them, but, as **Bruno Guidi** is keen to stress, they have*«people at the heart of everything: we are an enlightened family business, where we balance technology and the human factor, and where a handshake is worth as much as a signature on a contract».*



They welcomed me into their meeting room, located next to the factory. I could hear the noise of the milling machines and equipment creating the bronze and alloys used for their products. But around me were lots of beautiful, large artworks: photos of their production, and a lot more besides. A real collection.

I asked dad Bruno to talk about his relationship with art. Let's start from the beginning. Where did it all begin?
Ten years ago, when we produced a book to celebrate Guidi's 40 years in business. Through Anna Fileppo and her marketing agency I met an outstanding photographer, Jill Mathis, an American artist from San Antonio. Her photographs of the entire process that leads to the creation of my products made me see things from a new, surprising and wonderful perspective. Things I had always had under my nose took on a new life. She made me see my world from a different angle. She excited me. I love some of her works more than

others, but they are always surprising. And so she led me into the world of art.



But, if I'm not mistaken, you've had a passion for art since you were young.
Let me give you an example. You know METS [the Maine Equipment Trade Show] in Amsterdam? We've been going since 1990. And for me, as well as being important professionally, this always provides a great opportunity for me to go and visit the city's museums every year.

Guidi has always genuinely amazed me. You are the only company in the world of boating accessories, and one of very few in the nautical world in general, to have such a close relationship with art. And you're not just collectors: you use various artists to promote your company in a sophisticated way.
We are undoubtedly passionate about art, but we also have a precise aim: we think art and industry can go hand-in-hand perfectly well. It's a new form of patronage, an approach that is mutually beneficial for both worlds. We're also trying to make the company's image stand out, to position it at the top of the market, with a focus on quality, which also reflects our products. We started with Jill's photos and went from there, with our installations and stands at trade fairs.

Your forays into the world of art involve big names like Michelangelo Pistoletto, Alessandro Ciffo, Sergi Barnils, Chris Gilmour, Marco Lodola… Where to start?
With Alessandro Ciffo, for example, we attended Venice Design at Palazzo Michiel. We have always supported Ciffo and his silicone creations. At the most recent Versilia Yachting Rendez-Vous we created a great group stand with Mase, Tecnoseal and Veco. But I also like to remind people about *Surfin' Bird*, a luminous sculpture of a motorboat made of Perspex, LEDs and adhesive film by Marco Lodola, which we exhibited in Portofino. Or Chris Gilmour's *Motorboat*, which reproduces a classic Camuffo boat from Portogruaro, an historic Italian model. The shipyard was founded in 1438; it's simply the oldest in the world. Now the new, beautiful book featuring Jill Mathis's photos has arrived for our 50th anniversary. And that's just the start…

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