

# VANNI *goes arty* 2008



**The relationship between design and contemporary art. Is there a possible synergy between the two and how the focus on a particular territory reconciles with the goal of both of addressing a global public and economy?**

## **Patricia Urquiola (designer)**

Lots of answers spring to mind. Yes, an interesting subject. I've always devoted my energies to designing for industry. My studio is cluttered with models and prototypes: I'm often asked why I don't put on the odd exhibition. I keep everything because I really believe in mass-produced objects. I remember thinking about the Flexibility show where a topic was assigned, and I thought of the objects I was working on, to turn them into a 'manifesto' since they were going to be exhibits. We get a lot of fun in the studio playing a sort of game we've invented, a kind of think tank with my co-workers, not connected to any culture in particular: a "laboratoire lumière". Often when I return to the studio from journeying round Japan I'll be laden with miniatures – I love tiny objects. For instance, an object used in the tea ceremony, to whisk the tea leaves at the end of the process. The analogy with this object found its way into a lighting unit I was working on. It came out huge, in metal, quite different to look at, and the light ended up inside. Then we played with our 'chemistry set', mixing liquid and colour to express freedom of association, the great creative freedom that is the joy and the secret of our work. Personally, with my local cap on I think back over my trips. I don't know what global features I put into my 'local', but I do very much feel my projects are concerned with comparisons between cultures.

