

Timeline

50 ties: the early days of Abet Laminati



(1)

- **A.B.E.T. spa** (Anonima Braidese Estratti Tannici), founded in 1946 as a producer of tannin, **started in 1957**, in Bra, with the production of Laminate Railite.
- Limited collection composed of some plain **colours, wood and stone** reproductions (1). Sole format: 280x130 cm, sole thickness: 1,5 mm and sole finish: **Lucida**
- New finish: **Sei**

60 ties



(2)



(3)

- Since the Sixties, Abet has anticipated future trends by using lively colours for its laminate range. **Colours** such as giallo pop, rosso woom, verde pace, verde beat etc, colours which changed a purely imitative product into a rich material with personality and fresh potential. (2)
- At the 1st of January **1964** the **Print trademark** (3) was born, which would become a symbol of Abet's high quality decorative laminate known the world over for excellence in terms of appearance and technology. Extremely sturdy and versatile, Print HPL will continue to evolve, thanks to the innovative policy of the company.



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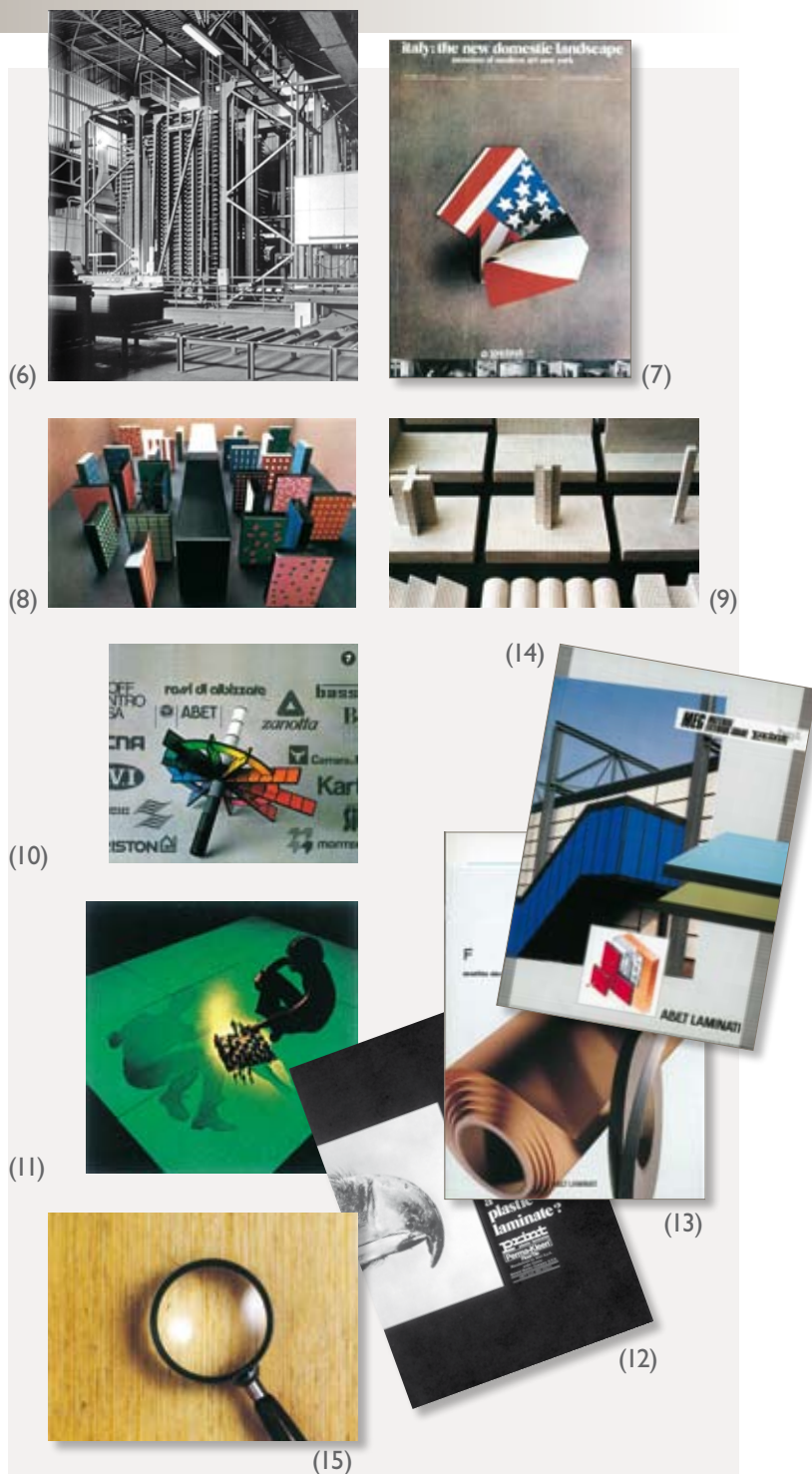
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- In **1965** Abet launched the compact, self-bearing, high-thickness laminate **Stratificato** (4), changing laminate from a covering material to an independent artifact, which can be appreciated for itself. In the same period, while Gio' Ponti was praising laminate as the "first material formulated by man", Mario Bellini, Joe Colombo and Enzo Mari produced the first pieces of furniture entirely made of laminate for La Rinascente.
- In **1967**, Abet Laminati inaugurated the **silk-screen printing laboratory** (5), to be a place of research and testing on surface decorations for architects, designers and companies all over the world.
- In **1967** the famous **PRINT LEGNO** collection was launched.

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70 ties

- In **1972**, at the Bra plant, the **biggest press** (6) yet to be built, 36 storey high, began producing high pressure laminate to the highest quality standards.
- In **1972**, the **MOMA of New York** (7) recognised the vitality of Italian design, by dedicating a great show to it. Abet Laminati, as the historical promoter of close links between industry and design, was one of the major supporters of this initiative.
- **Archizoom** (8), Trini Castelli, Sottsass, Sowden and **Superstudio** (9) - in collaboration with Abet - conceived the notion of “Neutral Surface”, a surface free from any cultural constraint. Because of its being “non-historical” and tradition-free, laminate is the ideal material for an unfettered search for new perceptual stimuli.
- With a pool of innovation-minded Italian companies, Abet fostered the creation of **Colordinamo 77** (10), a research centre whose goals were to enhance the utilisation and the expressive potential of colours, and to disseminate the culture of colour among companies and designers, through shows, seminars and publications.
- During the Seventies, Abet Laminati greatly expanded the range of possible uses of laminate, by launching products such as **Lumiphos** (1974) (11), the first fluorescent laminate, in the collaboration with Clino Castelli; **Permakleen** (1973) (12) for raised floors, on a licence from General Electric; **Folden** (1975) (13), a low-pressure laminate manufactured continuously; the first “**Serigrafia “Serie Misura”** (1979)” Collection, created in the silk-screen printing laboratory, the “**Metalli** (1974)” Collection, with an enticing aluminium finish and the first **EXTERIOR GRADE** (1975) (14) collection, HPL sheets applicable as self supporting wall cladding panels.
- **1979** : Print **TRAMA** (15): a surface made up of threads mounted on paper backings with different colours, which bring out the true structure of the product, highlighting its basic “naturalness”



Timeline

80 ties



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- **1980:** Collection **RELITECH**, **1981** collection **LAMIKORK**, **1982** collection **LEDER**
- **1982:** Abet presents **Engraving**
- Between the late Seventies and the early Eighties, **Alchimia and Memphis** (16) came into being: Abet Laminati supported their creation and encouraged their growth by taking an active part in the theoretical debate and producing its new series of “**Decori Serigrafia 83**” (17) as well as by providing funds for the design and manufacture of new furniture.



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- During the period of **1983-1986**, innovative products were developed, including: **Straticolor (1984)** (18), the first coloured self-supporting laminate, “**Decori Minimi (1983)**” (19), fine textured laminate of great success, and the first surface finish with a unique “velvety” touch of the “**Venice (1985)**” (20) range (precursor of the “Milano” range). The presence of laminate in the building sector became more and more significant thanks to the MEG range for exterior wall cladding and urban furnishings, and **Walkprint (1984)** - the natural evolution of Permakleen - for raised floors.



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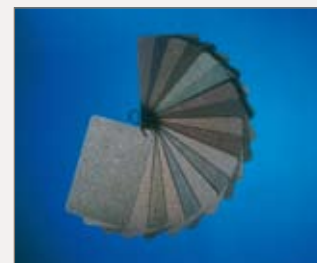
- **1987:** Abet was awarded the **Compasso d'Oro 87** for **Diafos** (21), the first translucent laminate with three-dimensional decoration. To publicize its image, Abet organised “Material Lights”, an itinerant show presenting a series of luminous objects made of Diafos and conceived by a group of designers coordinated by Ettore Sottsass.

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- **1987-1990:** An imitation product which is more genuine than the original: Abet began producing the **Finti** and **Falsi** (22) collections, made in imitation of natural products. This was followed by a new line of light catching surfaces: the **Iridescenti** (Iridescent) (1987), **Perlacei** (Pearly) (1987) and **Stars** (1989) (23) series. The MEG collection extended with the **MEG Architettura** (1987) (24) range.



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- **1989:** **Decori "Serigrafia Design"** (25) by E. Sottsass and M. De Lucchi and addition of new effects to the serie **Metalli** (26).



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- Alongside the on-going innovation of surface textures, Print HPL laminates are produced in different and bigger sizes, making for a wider range of possible uses and the optimization of shavings.

Timeline

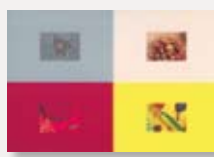
90 ties



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- In **1990**, Abet was awarded with the “**European Community Design Prize**”, a prestigious international recognition of the company’s achievements in terms of theory, design and technology, and the world-wide repute that Abet has won for the excellence, versatility and originality of its products.
- In **1990** Abet introduced its new “**Colori Speciali**” range (27-28), which **E. Sottsass** grouped into families by referring to the ethnic areas that had inspired the various colour schemes: thus we have Mexican, American, British, French and Indian colours. The new lines - Soft, Chic, Shock and Hot - of the **1996** renewed “**Colours**” (29) Collection reflect up-to-the-minute colour trends in architecture and design.
- High pressure laminates (HPL) stand out for their exceptional properties of strength and resistance to any type of stress, their workability and surface quality. In **1991**, **Print HPL** was certified for conformity to European directive **EN 438-I** (30), a sign of distinction reserved exclusively to products ensuring perfect compliance with the established standards.
- **1991: Milano** collection (31) replaces the ancient Venice range.
- **1993**: Abet reveals **TEFOR** (32) the first totally recyclable laminate
- **1993: Serigrafia** (36)
- **1994-1995**: A new range “**I Naturali (1995)**” (33) is produced by including thousands of tiny fibres on the surface of “**Fiber (1994)**” (34) and valuable real wood veneer laminate named “**Printwood (1995)**” laminates, to achieve the decorative variety and the feel of natural products. A third collection launched in the “I naturali” range was “**I Sugheri (1995)**”, reproducing precious cork patterns.
- **1998: Vertical Line**
- Light plays a star role in the latest metal surfaces (**Metalli** collection) (35) featuring gold, silver and copper ripples.

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New century

- **Serigrafia 2000** (2000) (37): 22 new silk screen printed patterns created by an international group of young designers coordinated by Atelier Mendini.
- **2000: Cresp** (38)
- 2001: 12 "Digital Print" decoratives in different finishes, coordinated by Sottsass Associati Studio for the exhibition "**Monitor Laminates**" (2000) (39) have been presented in a new collection.
- On Monday the 15th of October **2001** at the "Palazzo della Triennale" in Milan, in the presence of the Minister for Arts and Culture, Mr. Giuliano Urbani, and the regionals, provincial and municipal authorities, has been presented the 19th Compasso d'Oro. This prize, which was born in 1954, represents the most important prize in the world dedicated to the design of italian industrial sector. An international jury has conferred to ABET LAMINATI, together with the prestigious Ferrari of Maranello, the "**Compasso d'Oro alla carriera**" underlining the long process of research within the world of design. Furthermore the "Digital Print - Monitor Laminates" collection will be shown at the itinerant exhibition of the "Compasso d'Oro"
- **Colours and Textures (2001)** (40): The rediscovery of colour is a clearly defined trend. Abet Laminati presents a new collection of 16 decoratives chosen from the Colours collection divided in 4 ranges, 'Glossy', "Smoky", "Vitaminic", "Organic" and proposed in 4 different finishes: "Lucida", "Millerighe 2", "Microline", "Grana 2", which show how the same colour can be perceived in different ways depending on the type of finishes.



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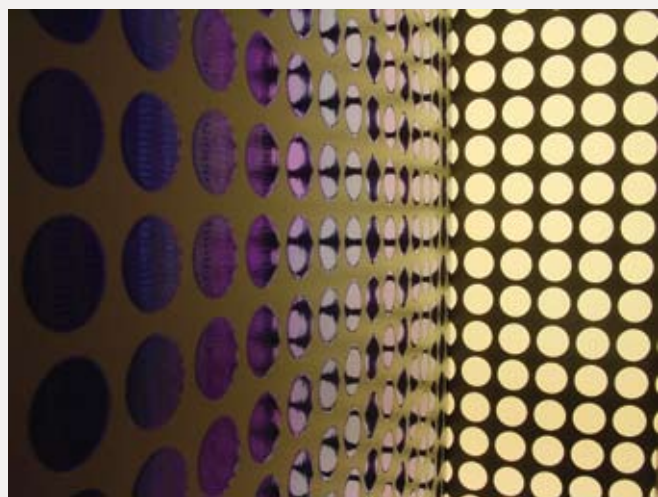
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- A new generation of surfaces (**2003**) (41): a new process of **digital printing** enables laminates to appear as leaves, wood, water, light, no matter what pattern or colour you may wish, without limit of quantity or any restriction of time or where the design is created. With the aim of exploring the vast range of possibilities opened up by this new production technique, Abet Laminati has invited 20 young designers from different countries to design a new laminated surface and, further, an object and/or setting using this surface. The project was co-ordinated by Paola Navone who also designed the exhibition held in Triennale di Milano

- **2002**: New **LEGNI** (woods) with **Seidue** finish

- **2003**: **Full Colour** (44): compact, self-supporting laminates with coloured cores (white, grey, brown)

- **2004**: **Silver** (42) a glossy laminate with a mirror effect, designed for vertical applications. The metallic surface is protected with a specific anodised treatment, which preserves its material qualities. All six of the variations of Silver capture the natural light and reflect it, weaving a contrasting texture of luminosity that evokes the exquisite characteristics of silver and elicits tactile and visual 3D sensations. Yet, the sense of depth is merely optical: to the touch, the panel is perfectly smooth and uniform and this unique contrast is what astounds and surprises and **Metalprint** (43): Gloss or matt metallic colours, saturated colours, opalescent colours obtained through the use of Diafos laminate and decorative paper with wood veneer, and a punched and lacquered aluminium sheet, which gives this laminate its silver effect. The exposure to a combination of heat and high pressure creates an irreversible reaction, which ensures its cohesiveness. In a total amount of 50 new different decorative proposals, carefully chosen, ideal to satisfy design needs in various sectors of application

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- **2005:** “Abet Laminati e Ettore Sottsass: 40 anni di lavoro insieme” (45-46)
- **2005: New York** (47) composed by 12 different colours in the new finish named “Longline” and **Ocean** (48)
- **2006: HR Laq** glossy colours with improved wear resistance; **New Legni** with **Grainwood** (49) finish
- **2006: CE Mark** for MEG and Stratificato
- **2007: Kaleidos** (50), laminates creating an amazing 3D visual effect
- **2007: ISO 9001** certification

