



*A journey through tradition, creativity and innovation:
the history of Italian eyewear on display*

THE LENS OF TIME: THE HISTORY OF EYEWEAR IN ITALY (7 May – 22 July, Venice)

The exhibit, focused on the history and future of Italian eyewear, to be held at Palazzo Flangini, iconic headquarters of the Fondazione di Venezia overlooking the Grand Canal, was introduced during MIDO 2025.

Milano, 8 February 2025 – **The Lens of Time**, an exclusive exhibit showcasing the history and evolution of Italian eyewear, was officially announced at a press conference during the 2025 edition of MIDO, the leading international eyewear trade show.

Sponsored and organized by **ANFAO** (Italian Optical Goods Manufacturers' Association), the exhibit will be curated by the **Fondazione Museo dell'Occhiale of Pieve di Cadore**, a hub for the conservation and study of the history of eyewear, in collaboration with the **Fondazione di Venezia**, an institution committed to enhancing the value of the city's cultural heritage, and with the **M9 Foundation, Museum of the 20th Century of Venice-Mestre**.

Hosted at the Fondazione di Venezia headquarters, **Palazzo Flangini**, a historic Venetian palace overlooking the Grand Canal, the show will be inaugurated on **May 7th** and remain open to the public **until July 22nd**.

It will be a journey through tradition, creativity and contemporary innovation. From the earliest rudimentary fourteenth century lenses to eighteenth century sunglasses, by way of modern technologies and state-of-the-art designs, **The Lens of Time** offers visitors an immersive experience of historic and contemporary pieces complemented by multimedia installations and exciting interactive narrations.

A compelling in-depth look at the exhibit's core nucleus is located in the adjacent **Church of San Geremia – Sanctuary of Lucia**, featuring objects and works connected to vision and Saint Lucia, the patroness saint of the eyes and the blind, including ex-voto objects, paintings and early vision-measurement tools.

*"The Lens of Time is not only an exhibit but a journey through time and human ingenuity. The history of eyewear is the history of an instrument that has changed the lives of millions of people, becoming a symbol of innovation, culture and style, with a crucial social role," remarked **Lorraine Berton**, president of ANFAO and MIDO. "A story through the centuries that begins in Venice and speaks of a community of individuals, of families that for generations have dedicated their lives to manufacturing excellence. With this exhibit, we want to honor not only the technical and stylistic evolution of the product but also the commitment and passion of entire generations who have made Italy a global hub for our industry."*

In addition to the exhibit, the show will be enhanced by a series of initiatives of great scientific, artistic and educational value which will expand its cultural range of offerings:

- **WDW Laboratories (Wear Design Workshop).** Deserving of special attention is this collaboration with **IUAV, the University of Venice**. Labs and workshops will be organized that actively engage young talent, professionals and students in projects of sustainability and technological innovation applicable to the sector, to explore the future of eyewear.
- **Themed events:** conferences and round tables on design and the aesthetics of eyewear, sustainability, Made in Italy and the challenges of technological innovation that are opening up for the sector.
- **Closing event:** on 22 July 2025, a meeting to explore the future of the industry.
- **M9 Corner - 20th Century Museum of Mestre:** an area dedicated to eyewear from the 1900s will be established as part of IdentItalia, an exhibit on the calendar at the M9 Museum of Mestre from September 2025 to February 2026.

Thanks to its strategic location and concurrence with the opening months of the **Biennale di Architettura [Architecture Biennale] 2025**, in addition to eyewear industry professionals, **The Lens of Time** aims to attract a varied audience of design connoisseurs and international tourists.

Situated in the heart of Venice, Palazzo Flangini is a unique setting that heightens the prestige of the event and calls attention to a product that is far more than a mere accessory: a symbol of human ingenuity and Italian know-how.

With **The Lens of Time**, Italian eyewear narrates its extraordinary journey between tradition and the *avant garde*, inviting the public to discover how an object of daily use can embody stories of innovation, art and beauty.

Participants in the press conference, moderated by Radio 24 journalist Marialuisa Pezzali, were Adolfo Urso, Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy, Lorraine Berton, President of ANFAO and MIDO, Nicola Belli, Vice-President of ANFAO responsible for production, innovation and Made in Italy, Giovanni Dell'Olivo, Managing Director of Fondazione di Venezia, and Daniela Zambelli, Director of the Museo dell'Occhiale [Eyewear Museum].

For information regarding the show and events, a dedicated page will soon be available on the ANFAO website www.anfao.it/en.

Palazzo Flangini - [Cannaregio 252, 30121 Venezia VE](#)

7 May – 22 July 2025

Associazione Nazionale Fabbricanti Articoli Ottici [National Association of Optical Goods Manufacturers]
20145 Milano - Via A. Riva Villasanta, 3
Tel. 02 32673673 – Fax 02 324233
www.anfao.it - anfao@anfao.it

ANFAO Press Office

CAROLINA MAILANDER COMUNICAZIONE

Marcella Laterza +39 335 7559154 marcella.laterza@cmailander.it

Stella Casazza +39 349 3579552 stella.casazza@cmailander.it

Martina Bruno +39 346 084 0220 martina.bruno@cmailander.it