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Interview with Marco & Giulia Del Giudice

(Founders of DEGMA ROMA)



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Introduction

Marco and Giulia Del Giudice, siblings and owners of DEGMA ROMA are revolutionizing Roman fashion with a unique focus on sustainability while at it.

In this interview with The Thinking Watermill Society, we learn more about Marco and Giulia's passion for fashion and the environment which they express through their street-chic designs using upcycled materials.



1. What inspired the creation of the DEGMA Roma brand?

DEGMA was born from the union of two passions — fashion and the environment.

We are two siblings, Marco and Giulia — completely different, both in style and character — but we found ourselves pleasantly connected in the realization of this project that brings out the best of our abilities.

On one side, we have Marco — the creative, the artist, the painter of our vision. On the other side, Giulia — the mastermind who tries to sell the vision, giving it more visibility.



Our passion for fashion was born and cultivated throughout the years in a really overwhelming way. Giulia is informed about every new trend and change, while Marco continues to observe this world while trying to bring change.

Our love for the environment has been there since we were kids. In fact, we have always lived halfway between the city and the countryside among trees, plants and animals — a world that we feel is very close to us. That is why we wanted to juxtapose the two together, to make sure that our passions are in balance with the context that surrounds us and consequently with nature itself (or at least we try as much as we can).



2. Fashion consumers are increasingly focusing on eco-friendly brands. How does your brand educate consumers on such brands?

It's true! Fortunately, during the last few years, many brands have approached sustainability. However, DEGMA not only offers a series of eco-friendly brands but also tries to tell their story, origins, commitment, care, precision, will, passion and work — all factors that should be the basis of every production.

Through this whole process, we try to bring people closer to this thought: That fashion and all that surrounds it should never be just a piece of cloth from which we obtain some new fashionable product, but history. Being informed just a little more could be a great achievement not only for this industry.



3. Upcycling and recycling fashion is another exciting aspect of DEGMA Roma. What is the difference between the two concepts in fashion?

In our store, we especially try to propose the concept of Upcycling, through the creations of the brand "**Nessuno.Roma**".

Upcycling consists of a creative process that aims to modify and maintain the product at the same time. Compared to recycling, this method differs in providing a different function to the initial garment, without the need for additional processing techniques, while still giving it a higher quality (thanks to the special attention given during processing).

So, upcycling brings unused clothing back to life and adds a unique piece to the wardrobe.



4. What are your thoughts on the benefits of upcycling to the environment?

Upcycling is a process that aims to reuse rather than discard once used. It is a very beneficial method whereby the use of many environmental resources is minimized and the ultimate goal is to create a more sustainable reality.

5. What are some of the tips you can give our audience on how to upcycle and recycle their wardrobe items?

A starting point for approaching the world of sustainable fashion could definitely be to try not to throw away products as soon as we see any defects because even with the biggest hole, tear, fraying, indelible stain or whatever, you can always create something new, maybe different from the original but in some cases, even more beautiful.

So, the tip that we feel we can give is to open our minds about everything we own because it is from there that you can make that product you want so much and you probably already have but in a different form.

6. What has been your experience as an eco-friendly brand in a world that still buys into fast fashion trends?

Our experience has certainly been an exhausting and sometimes demoralizing challenge. But, we realize that it is precisely an initiative like ours (small and young with a lot of drive) that actually has the possibility to change the way people think.

We are aware that a real change should be made in purchasing decisions, but it is a long and far from the obvious path. People will continue to buy as long as fast fashion companies produce and sell at surely cheaper prices.

We can understand very well that as of today there is too great an economic gap between the world of fast fashion and eco-friendly fashion, and that is why a real revolution will occur when sectors such as eco-friendly fashion are no longer rare, but normal, for everyone.



7. DEGMA Roma notably has creative fashion pieces that do not follow ordinary trends. How do you describe your design aesthetic?

DEGMA definitely differs in its street but elegant, minimal but chaotic style. It's not possible to attribute a specific design to DEGMA, but it is DEGMA that acquires different designs each time, and maybe this is the interesting part — change style as soon as you think you've found it.

We offer garments from totally different brands and each of them offers a different style — from classic jeans to a linen shirt or a comfortable t-shirt up to a very original skirt. One day we offer you elegance, another day we focus only on comfort, the next day we give you both and finally, the day after you find everything changed.

8. DEGMA Roma created the Nessuno Roma and Dr. Denim collections. What challenges have you faced in repurposing the main garment to create your designs?

I would like to emphasize that my creations belong to **Nessuno.Roma** brand, which is different from the **Dr. Denim** brand that we love to offer to our customers inside our store.

The research and commitment to the cleaning process are definitely the most demanding challenges in the transformation of any garment. Another fundamental step for my work is definitely the ability to train my mind and have good mental flexibility in order to imagine a completely different product from the initial one. So in this case, we can say that the mind, does 80 percent of the work!

9. Are there any legal obligations or ethics that you keep in mind while running DEGMA Roma?

Surely it is not easy to manage a store, especially when you have never done it before. In the beginning, you don't even know how to open the cash register.

Unfortunately, nowadays a store like DEGMA needs a lot of attention. Even if you forget just a little obligation, you can carry a penalty with you for the next 12 months. So yes, there are many legal obligations.

Regarding ethics, it is a different matter. Any project you want to realize and whatever dream you have needs basic principles. Ethics is one of them. We are new in this field, and like all beginners, we should learn to swim in this sea, with less fear and more confidence.



But, we have no obligations at the level of ethics, because we already have our own ethics among us and with clients, and not at the marketing level but at the human level.

We are carrying out a project that deals with sustainability, but for us, this concept is not only limited to the design of the garments, the quality of the fabric or possible pollutants but also extends to respect for people — a respect that we always hope can be mutual.

10. DEGMA Roma has a promising future. What new projects should we look out for soon?

Thank you, especially for giving us this great opportunity to tell us about ourselves.

We really have a lot of projects we have to tidy up a bit and put everything in its place and, above all, find the right time for everything.

We are constantly evolving and aim to come up with so many new things through fashion and art. We hope that everything will go in the right direction, and talk about it again soon because it will mean that we are making a difference in our own small way.



Thank you for your cooperation on behalf of The Thinking Watermill Society. All the best in your current and future endeavours, Marco and Giulia.

Learn More about DEGMA ROMA

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About The Thinking Watermill Society

The Thinking Watermill Society is a non-profit organization. In particular, it promotes the debate and exchange of ideas among its members regarding the changes underway in the economic, cultural and social landscape, together with the analysis of the consequences that said changes entail, so as to identify the possible opportunities of economic, cultural and social growth related to said changes.

Our headquarters are in Rome, Italy.

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