

THE BRICK LOGIC

How can we apply the concept of quality to an audio rack? We have tried to get an answer meeting one of the emerging manufacturers in this field: we might define his company a start-up since it conquered a great part of the exclusive world of the Hi-Fi...

There are only fourteen sculptors officially recognized by Lego, one of them is Italian... Lorenzo Belloli is not among them but he is Italian and he created his own Lego bricks.

Lorenzo is "unique" in his own way: he is the only one that makes modular audiophile equipment racks and he is also the only one that built a carbon fiber audio rack...

"We do not promise miracles. A rack is, first of all, a piece of furniture, but each product is tested with care, from the packaging to the accelerometer testing". These are the words that stand out from the web site of the company located in Bergamo that picked my attention and made me think that a visit to Bassocontinuo was a good idea, especially because we have in program a special issue dedicated to "supports and shelves" that will be published shortly...

When we met, the first words that Belloli said - *they say that we are too much into design, but for me, actually this is a compliment* - comforted me. Then, when I told him that in this field both Ikea racks and other very expensive racks are suggested - because "they sound better" - he answered: "I cannot say it, I am not able to determine that...". Very well but in this case, how do we recognize the quality of this kind of products? The first answer comes from the official advertising of the brand: "every product is tested with great care, from the packaging to the accelerometer tests". This is something I want to examine in depth, and here I am in Bergamo Bassa to do so; but first let me take a step backward to start from...the beginning.

As it often happens in this field, this business was born from a personal need. One of the future partners had changed his electronics with a very heavy Primare device and noticed that the Ikea table was bending, he needed a new rack. The market did not offer satisfying options and therefore he started to build something together with Lorenzo. In 2008 the model Zero of Bassocontinuo was created. The name Bassocontinuo comes from Belloli's passion for baroque music but it has also a practical explanation - "it was one of the available domains"...

And so one rack comes after the other and the business started. Belloli has worked for a long time both in the rubber processing field and in the fashion field. He is the designer of the first production, the Classic Line with 3 legs tables, and of the marketing strategy. "Our merit lies in proposing a different product: for the first time racks have a design and are not just a rectangular thing with aluminum or painted iron legs. From the first line of products we have offered 16 different finishes, the customer that can spend money loves to have a customized and unique product".

This philosophy is enhanced by the possibility of creating a totally modular product. It can be customized as for the number of legs - three or four - for the dimension of the tops, for the material of the supports - copper, aluminum, steel - for the number and consistency of the tops. All the tops are made in painted or leather covered multi-layer birch; the customer can choose from an amazing selection and can also put an insert made of root-wood, carbon, aluminum or other material.

The choice of materials that are strong is very reassuring, spikes and inserts that are machined from solid and are filled with marble chips maybe do not "sound" better but give more reliability ("defining the rack an essential product would be ridiculous, would be asserting a lot of stupid things; our products do what other products on the market do. One thing is for sure, with a very good turntable, our racks are useful if not essential when the alternative is a stand on which you position also the loudspeakers and it resonates").

The shelves are guaranteed up to 80 kilos but they are tested to bear up to 160 kilos. The packaging is the great pride of the brand: it has been studied by the most important company of the sector, the box and the internal packaging are modular and comply with the international ISTA chart that envisages tests on 8 different types of falls according to the volume and weight of the packaging.

The carbon rack, which is unique on the market and is the pride of the Company ("...in 2012, after the first big increase in sales, we started to demonstrate that our products are not only technological but also beautiful in their design") has been tested by CNR ("if we are not certain that it has an influence on the sound at least we are sure that it has been produced in a certain way") with tests and charts obtained making the floor vibrate and examining the reactions of the product. And then, Belloli says "...we assume that this is a rack, then we can conjecture anything...", the fact that every single top with its accessories is always accompanied by a label stating the day, month, year of production, the type of product, the daily progressive number, the destination and the receiver (the content of the box and the finishing) it is a very good way to reassure customers with sweet little words.