

A RACK JUST LIKE A FERRARI

Northern Italy can boast of the highest density of luxury brands in the world. No other region has skillfully mastered the balancing act between traditional craftsmanship and high-tech manufacturing like this. Lorenzo Belloli has exclusive racks made from the finest materials.



All Bassocontinuo racks are perfectly crafted down to the smallest detail. And: There are no "fake materials", just as in the picture always genuine carbon and steel made from solid materials.



In musicology, the so-called basso continuo is an established term, since it shaped an entire era with the Baroque, which is why it is also referred to as the basso continuo era. The Italians call it "basso continuo", a continuous bass, which is the basis of practically all compositions of the 17th and 18th centuries. When Lorenzo Belloli launched his new brand some ten years ago in Bergamo, northern Italy, he simply called it Bassocontinuo. This was not by chance, but with the clear intention of echoing the original meaning of the term. Lorenzo Belloli didn't just want to build hi-fi racks, he wanted to create compositions. He wanted to give the high end a new musical foundation in order to make it somewhat pathetic.

Today, after ten years, the wiry entrepreneur, who keeps himself fit with jogging and healthy nutrition, has almost achieved his dreams. With Bassocontinuo, he has created a brand that stands like no other for extraordinary racks, which has become a solid musical foundation for the finest high-end systems all over the world. His company is located directly at the Bergamo airport, which is now the third largest in the country, ahead of Milan-Linate. It is only a stone's throw from there, for example, to his German importer, who in turn is located directly at the Hamburg airport. During our visit to Lorenzo, he was sitting on packed suitcases on his way to Moscow. He had just returned from China and Singapore a few days ago. It is no coincidence that Russia and the Far East are among his most important sales markets - in ten years he has built up Bassocontinuo into a high-end world brand thanks to his energetic approach.

It all started in 2007 with a coincidence. And - although it may sound clichéd now - it was in a garage. It was due to a good friend who had replaced his small Denon system with a veritable high-end system and was looking for a solid basis for his powerful individual components. Lorenzo, until then only an audiophile music lover, set out with his friend to find an adequate rack - starting in Bergamo and then searching the Milan high-end studios without success. Afterwards, it has to be said, they didn't find what they were looking for. The lack of a high-quality rack on the market that was appealing in terms of design aroused the ambition of Lorenzo, who was still active in the fashion industry at the time, from then on spent every minute of his spare time in a garage that had been converted into a workshop, where he produced a rack with great attention to detail that corresponded to his qualitative and aesthetic ideas.



Material of superlatives: the stabilization. The "Cross" of the Revolution Line weighs 1.5 millimeters of thin carbon just 600 grams, but holds a pressure of over 300 kilograms standing.



The boss of Bassocontinuo: Lorenzo Belloli draws on the scientific advice of the Polytechnic of Milan and relies on the materials and an exquisite structure of subcontracting companies in northern Italy, for his production.



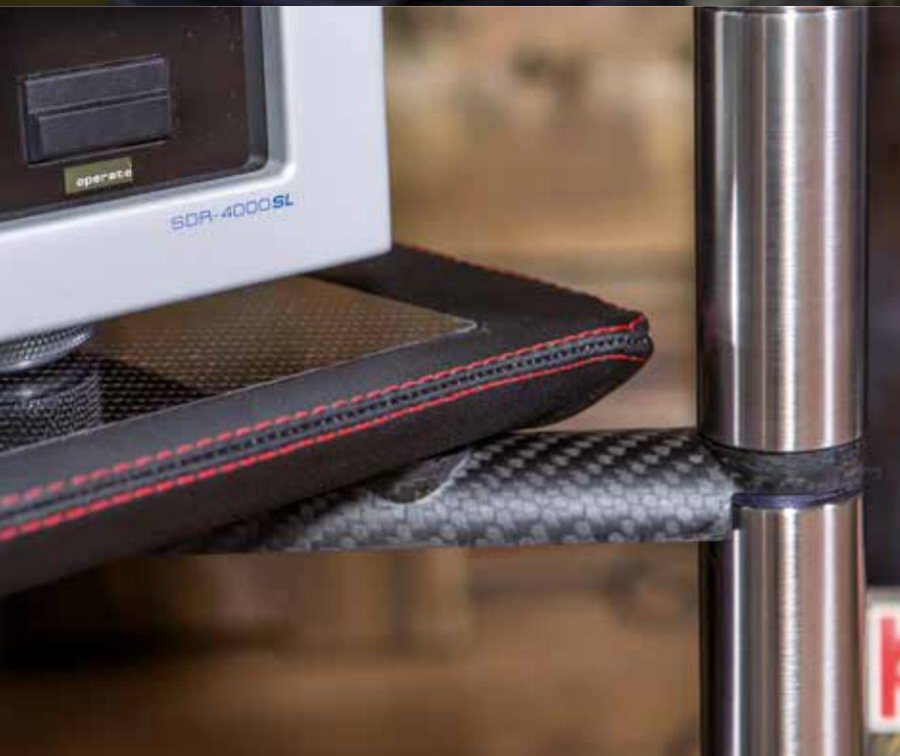
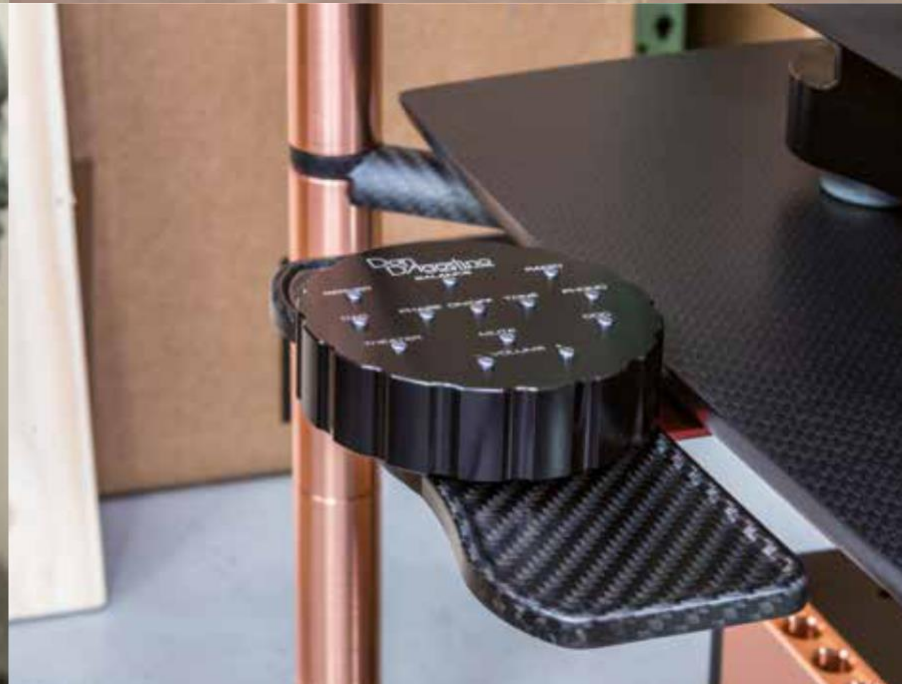
His friend was so full of praise that Lorenzo enthusiastically designed more prototypes, which he exhibited at the Top Audio Show in Milan - and won the prize for the best design. One year later he was already represented at the High End in Munich with a minimalist stand - and he had already won distributors for Germany, Switzerland and France. The rack manufacturer Bassocontinuo emerged from a coincidence and an ambitious garage project.

The secret of the young entrepreneur's success can be quickly explained: he developed a rack that was different from all the others, a rack that had never existed before in this quality. "The rack is a technical product," says Lorenzo Belloli, "but it is also a piece of furniture". From the very beginning, the young entrepreneur from Bergamo designed the rack as a luxury product. As a career changer from the fashion industry, he was not only fixated on sound, but also on design. "It was clear to me right from the start that we were operating in a market that was far too narrow. Men spend a fortune on cars or a Patek Philippe watch - and their imagination ends with Bose for Hi-Fi." Lorenzo Belloli sees it as an advantage that he wasn't among the first with his racks, that he was able to take his time and see what was on the market - and what could be done differently and better.

So what did he do better from the beginning, what distinguishes Bassocontinuo from other competitors? First of all, there is the strategic location advantage in northern Italy. Although Italy has for years been the focus of attention due to over-

indebtedness and economic problems, on a closer look it is a two-divided country: while the south is sinking deeper and deeper into a permanent recession, the north has full employment. Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna are home to all the medium-sized champions who have shaped the excellent reputation of "Made in Italy" throughout the world. Kitchens by Boffi, bathrooms by Antonio Lupi, furniture by Cassina or Kristalia, lamps by Artemide or Foscarini - all these luxury brands stand for the highest design and processing quality. One of the main reasons for this is the world's uniquely dense infrastructure of highly specialized suppliers who master their craft perfectly - from traditional leather manufacturers to metalworking specialists to the high-precision production of carbon fiber-reinforced plastics such as carbon. And Lorenzo Belloli began to realize his ambitious rack plans right at the heart of Bergamo.

What distinguishes Bassocontinuo racks, what has made them stand out over the years? Anyone who now expects a hymn of praise for the design is mistaken: Lorenzo is especially focused on what he believes to be the central characteristic - on the statics, and on the technical construction. As a further distinguishing feature, he cites modular flexibility. While racks at that time were basically fixed constructions that could not be adapted, his basic idea from the very beginning was to give the customer a rack that could grow with his requirements and ideas. A single rack, so to speak, for the longest



Made to measure: whether carbon, finest leather or metal parts made from solid materials - Lorenzo Belloli carefully selects his producers, every detail undergoes a careful final inspection before it is finally assembled.



possible high-end life. "Such a sustainable approach might not be the best way to earn as much money as possible," admits the rack producer, but has further consolidated his outstanding reputation. And also made sure that used bassocontinuo racks can hardly be seen and therefore remain stable in value.

"Designing a stable rack is not the real challenge," says Lorenzo, explaining his design approach: "Above all, it has to eliminate vibrations." Damping elements absorb vibration energy, but suitable material combinations also help to absorb vibrations. Lorenzo Belloli has relied on the advice of the Polytechnic in Milan from the very beginning - with his staff, who are also experienced in earthquake research, he was able to further develop his racks and launch a carbon rack based entirely on scientific research as early as 2014. The engineers have used this rack at the latest to research exactly how vibrations - not only from the ground, but also from the turntable drive or CD drive - can be optimally absorbed. "Since then, we have known exactly what happens in a rack," says Belloli, summarizing the insights gained with the scientists. They flow into every Bassocontinuo rack - the less compromising the battle of materials, the more encompassing.

Of course, the basic line at the base can't keep up with the ultimate Bassocontinuo racks, which reflect what's currently possible in terms of effort and cost structure. So Lorenzo Belloli, who is also his own controller, was able to give the Revolution-Line a chassis made entirely of carbon, a material which he is enthusiastic about. The stabilizing "cross" of the Revolution-Line made of 1.5 millimeter thin carbon weighs just 600 grams, but can withstand a pressure of over 300 kilograms. Rack designer Belloli only uses genuine materials

that offer a wealth of possibilities. Hollow tubes, which can be filled with sand are not used on Bassocontinuo. Metal is always full metal; metal parts are manufactured and hand polished in selected specialist companies by the most modern CNC milling machines before they are fed into the racks.

24 different suppliers from the region supply the parts for a Bassocontinuo rack. Just covering a single rack level with genuine leather takes about one and a half hours of highly qualified manual work. All the materials used are genuine; a fake leather or carbon look is not an option for Belloli. "We constantly receive offers and could have our racks produced in the Far East at a fraction of the cost," says the entrepreneur, yet we never gave any thought to this possibility. The nearest carbon supplier, which also supplies Ferrari, is located in neighboring Brescia. Another, which in turn equips Lamborghini and Porsche, is located in Piedmont. If you want to deliver absolute high-end quality, you have to think uncompromisingly as well. "I'd rather sell fewer racks but better ones," says Belloli. The success proves him right.