



totem

Original design by
Mario Bellini

BRIONVEGA

totem

1971



1971

totem

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Mario Bellini

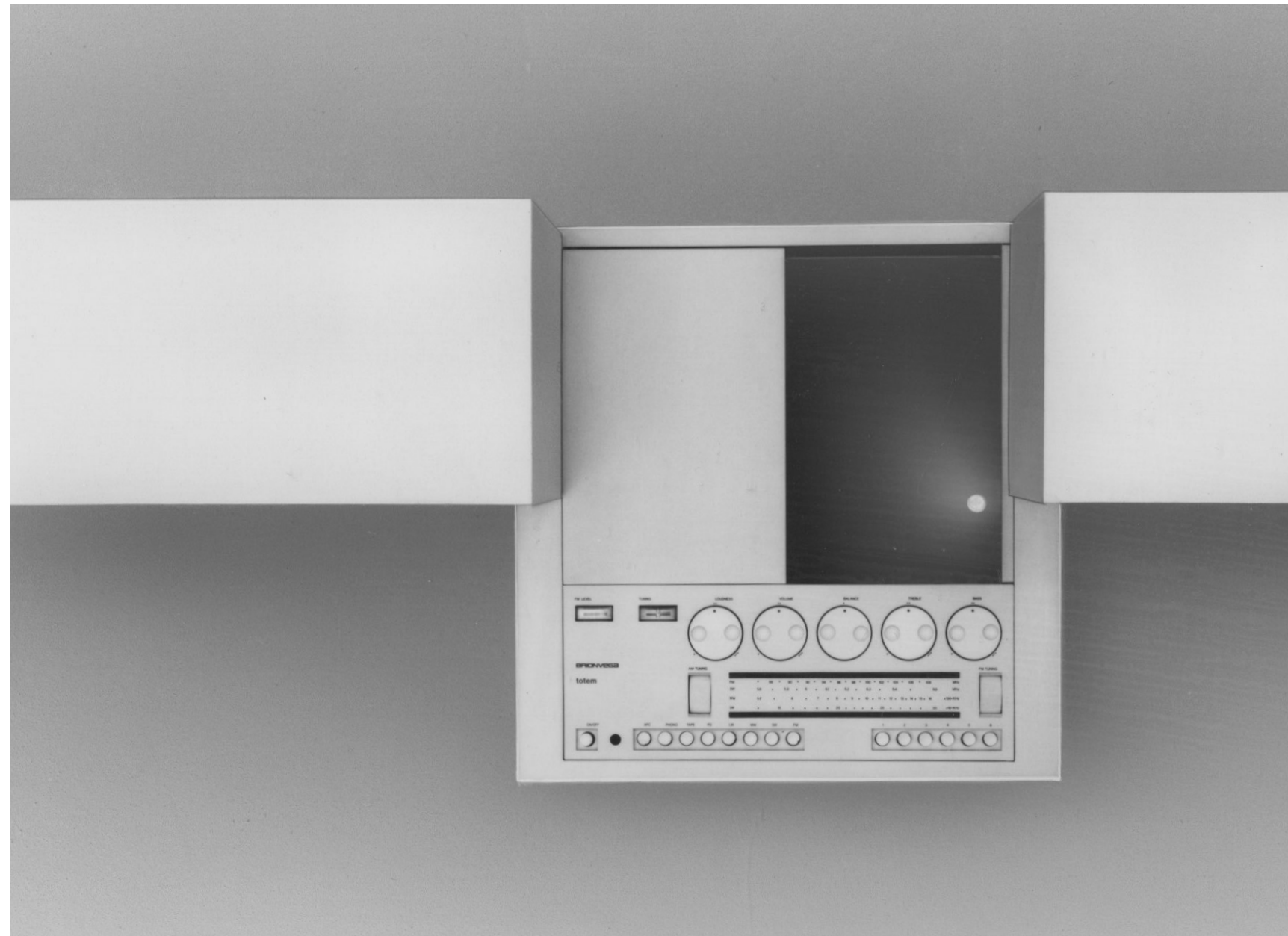
1971

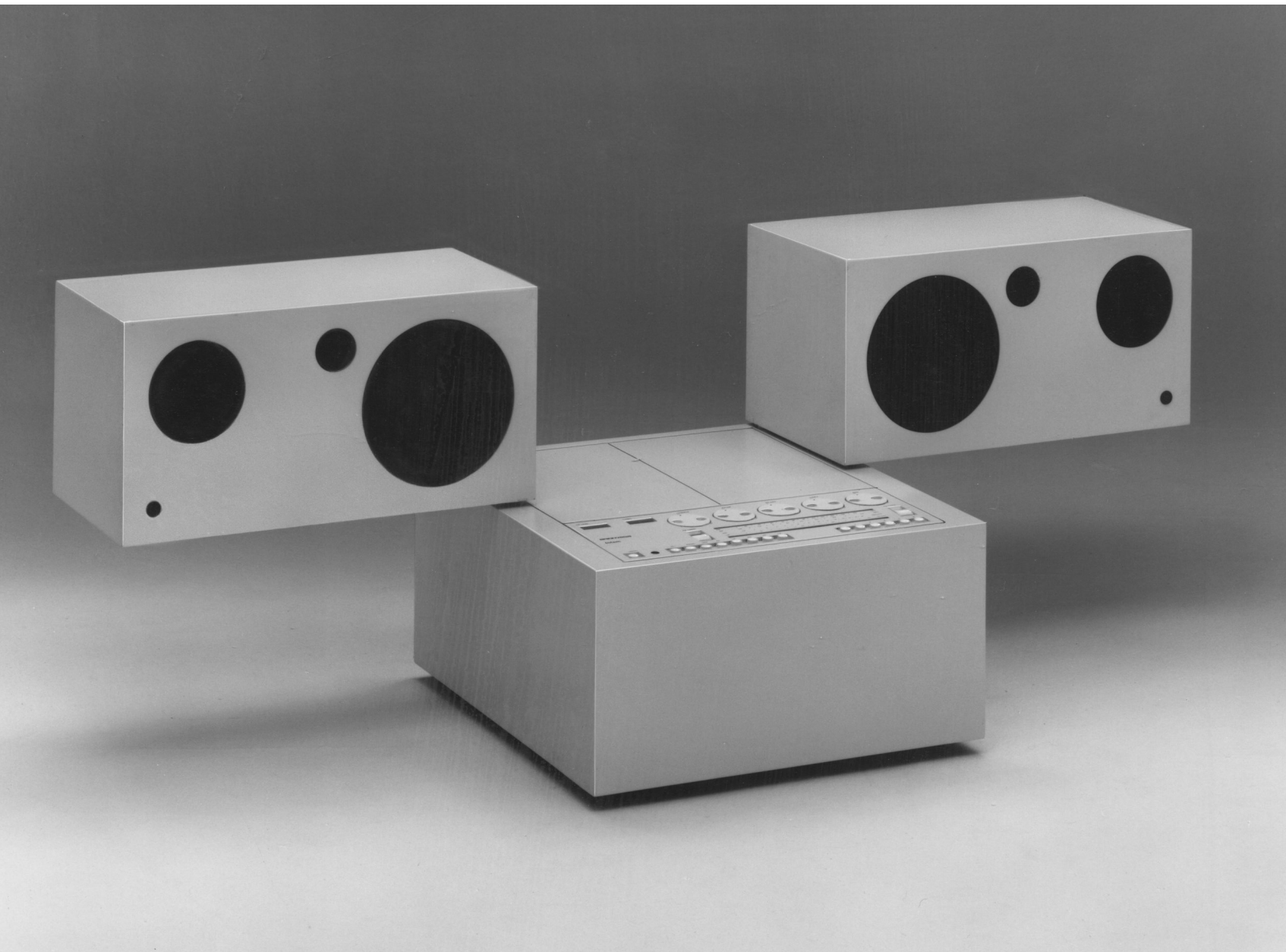
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« With Totem I did not want to attract the individual enthusiast, the passionate experimenter. Rather I want to give a pleasing form to the system, so as to make it easier to place in a domestic setting, and not necessarily in a room set aside for the use of professional equipment. »

-Mario Bellini

Brionvega
by Decio Giulio Riccardo Carugati
published by Mondadori Electa, 2003





1971

totem

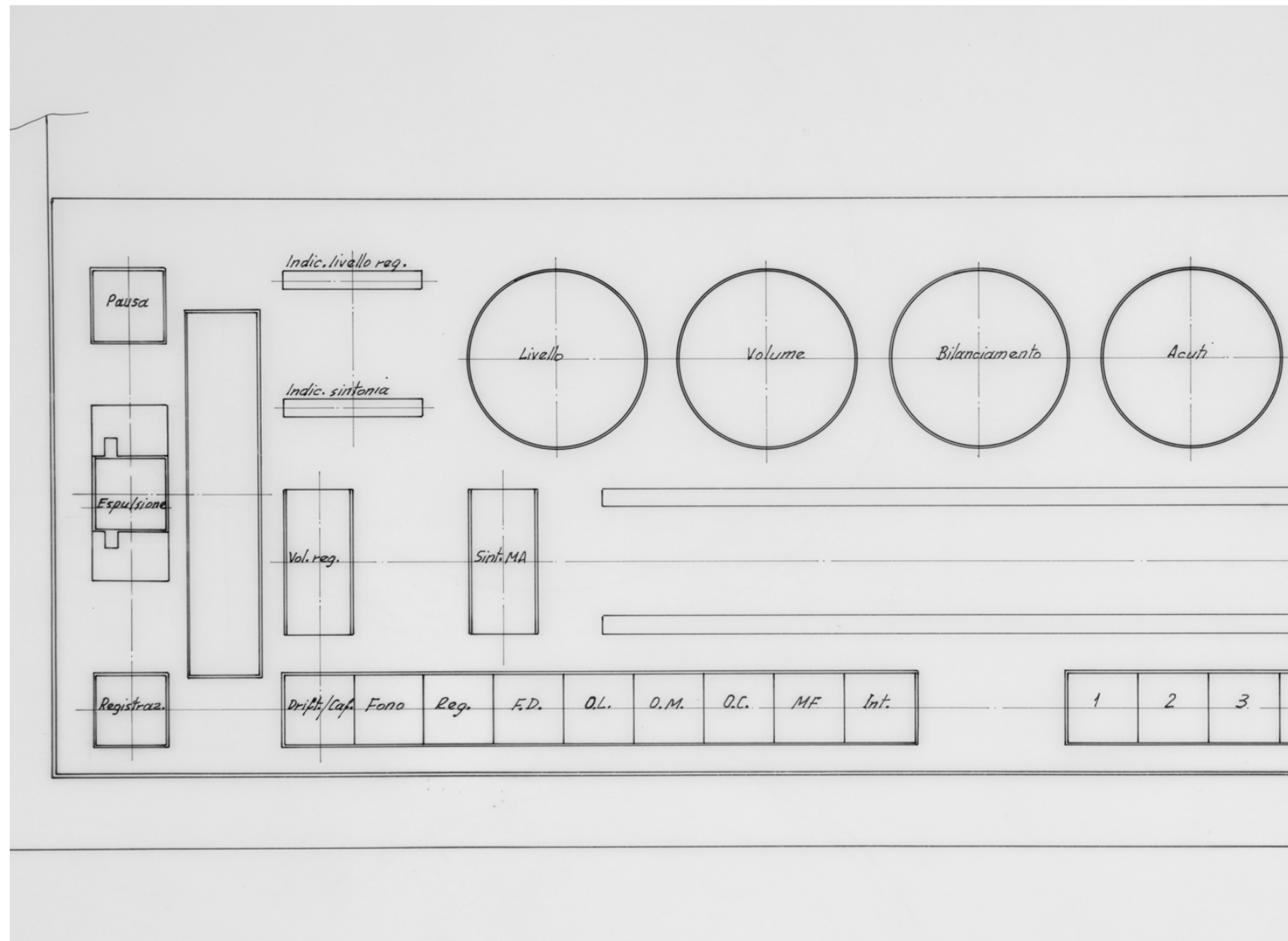
Totem is a famous design work conceived by the architect Mario Bellini and launched on the market in 1971 by BRIONVEGA. An object that encompasses the search for primary forms, such as the simple volume of a cube and which leads to modularity and composability, hiding the functions of a Hi-Fi. From this apparent cube, Bellini brings out a stereo system, speakers included; he calls it Totem rr130.

The Totem, together with other works by Bellini and Brionvega, is exhibited at the [MoMa in New York](#).

1971

totem

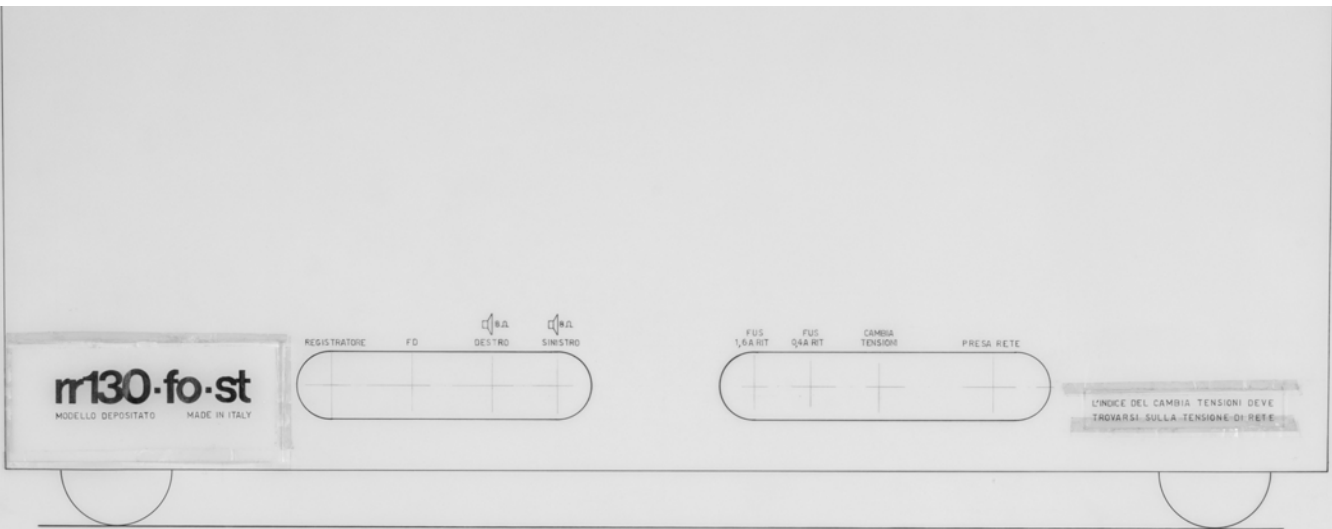
« We had to match the beautiful form with the best technological content. And here we often ran into difficulty, as the sales department would even ask us for samples to meet a demand that greatly exceeded the supply. Mario Bellini's RR130 Totem hi-fi was a truly special case. We tested a first model with the apparatus of the RR126, obtaining wholly unsatisfactory results. »



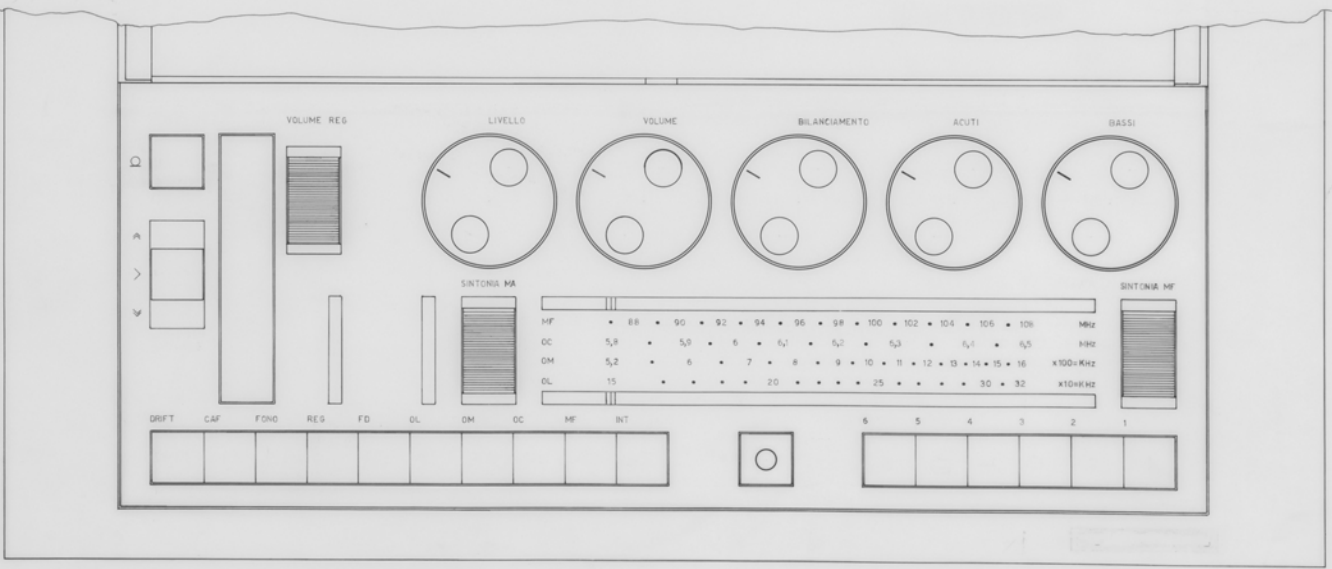
Brionvega

by Decio Giulio Riccardo Carugati
published by Mondadori Electa, 2003

Vista posteriore →



Vista comandi →



1971

totem

« Totem, a form of rare equilibrium, left no margins of tolerance: it had to be a perfect cube when closed. It was hard to fit the speakers in: the scraped on the top of the piece of furniture and, even worse, they tended to drop below the intended level as they emerged, owing to the slackening of the supporting wires. Using a technique that entailed a play of one centimeter, there was no way we could provide the play of one millimeter expressly request by the architect. We attempted to solve the problem in production, in order to satisfy the immediate interest on the model, sometimes by adjusting individual pieces. In this way five hundred exemplars were produced and sold at a price that exceeded the the cost of the Fiat Cinquecento. »

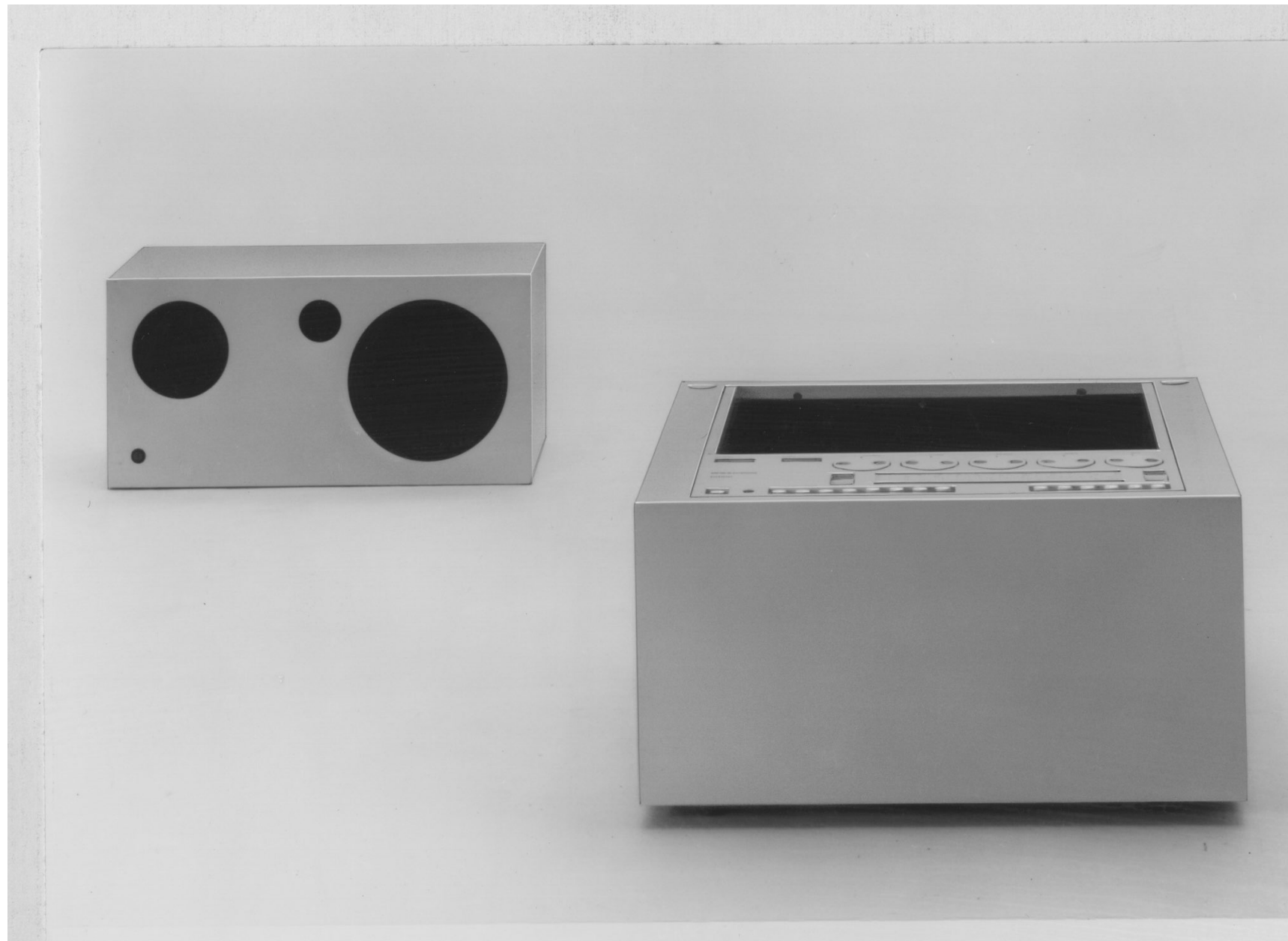
Brionvega
by Decio Giulio Riccardo Carugati
published by Mondadori Electa, 2003

1971

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« Bellini decided not to emphasize the technical aspects of the rr130's design, choosing instead to create a supremely subtle hi-fi system that would fit easily into domestic environments. Despite the quiet simplicity of the form, an element of surprise is present when the hermetic cube is opened up to reveal the speakers, the control fascia and the turntable. »

Mario Bellini
Furniture, Machines & Objects
by Enrico Morteo - Published by Phaidon, 2015



«In order to become a “machine” every mechanism need a “body”, in other words, a piece of “furniture” through which to express and organize itself, in order to become comprehensible and to form a relationship with ourselves and our domestic landscape.»

1977

Mario Bellini
Furniture, Machines & Objects
by Enrico Morteo - Published by Phaidon, 2015



Designer

Mario Bellini



Designer

Mario Bellini

Born in Milan in 1935, he is an architect, critic and designer.

The 8 Compasso d'Oro would be enough - alone - to explain the genius and inventiveness of Mario Bellini, an internationally renowned architect and designer, former director of Domus magazine. The numerous exhibitions in Italy and abroad confirm an incredible career, the monographic of the MoMa - Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1987 the consecration of his absolute talent. Among the companies that have relied on him, over the years, stand out - in addition to Brionvega - Cassina, Yamaha, Rosenthal and Renault. Twenty-five of his works are present in the permanent collection of the MOMA - Museum of Modern art in New York.

totem

2021

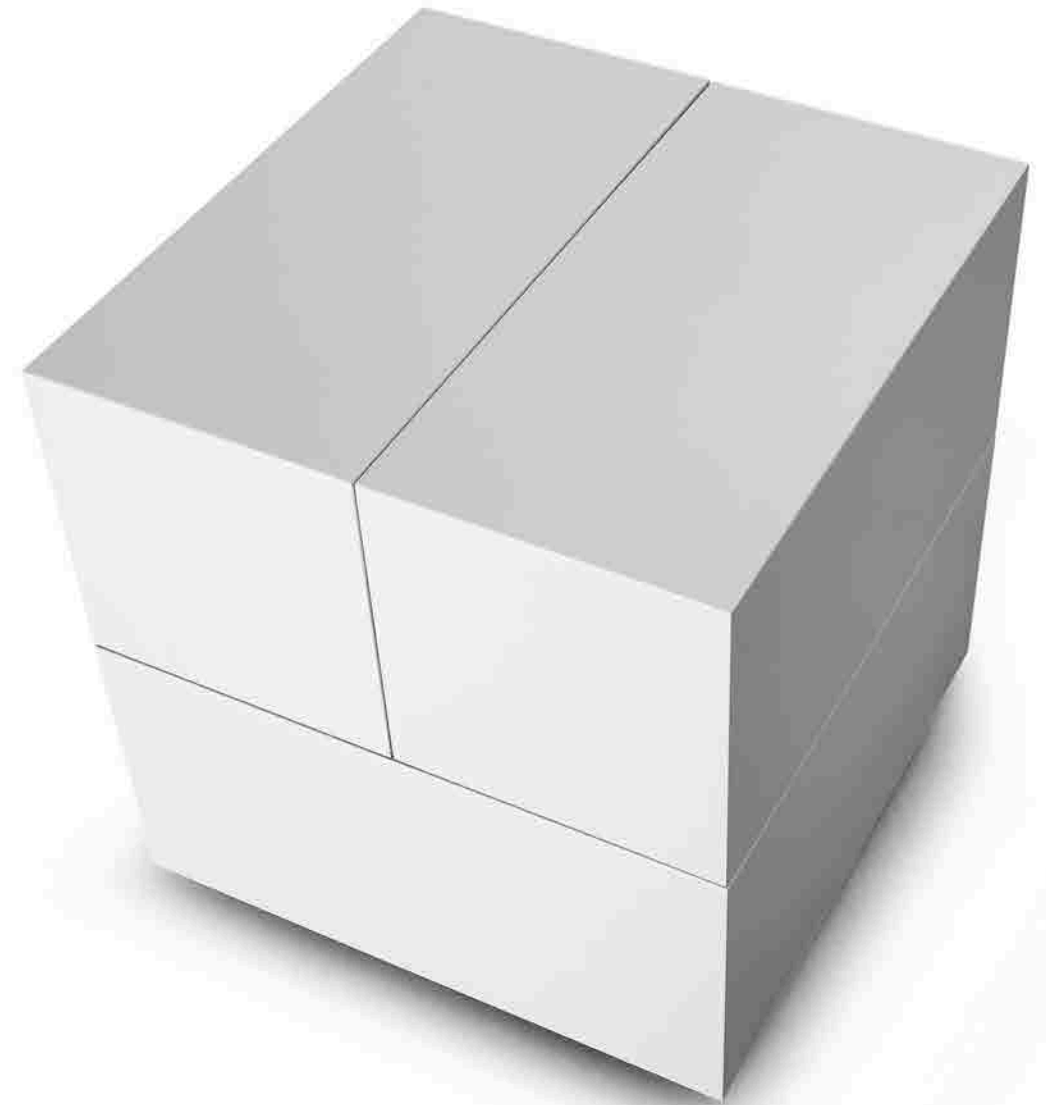
« Music is an immaterial message and has no visible form. Totem hides and encloses in the ideal purity of a cube (movable on invisible wheels) its "musical vocation" which is revealed and spreads with the touch of our hands, which open it to activate all its potential for sound reproduction.

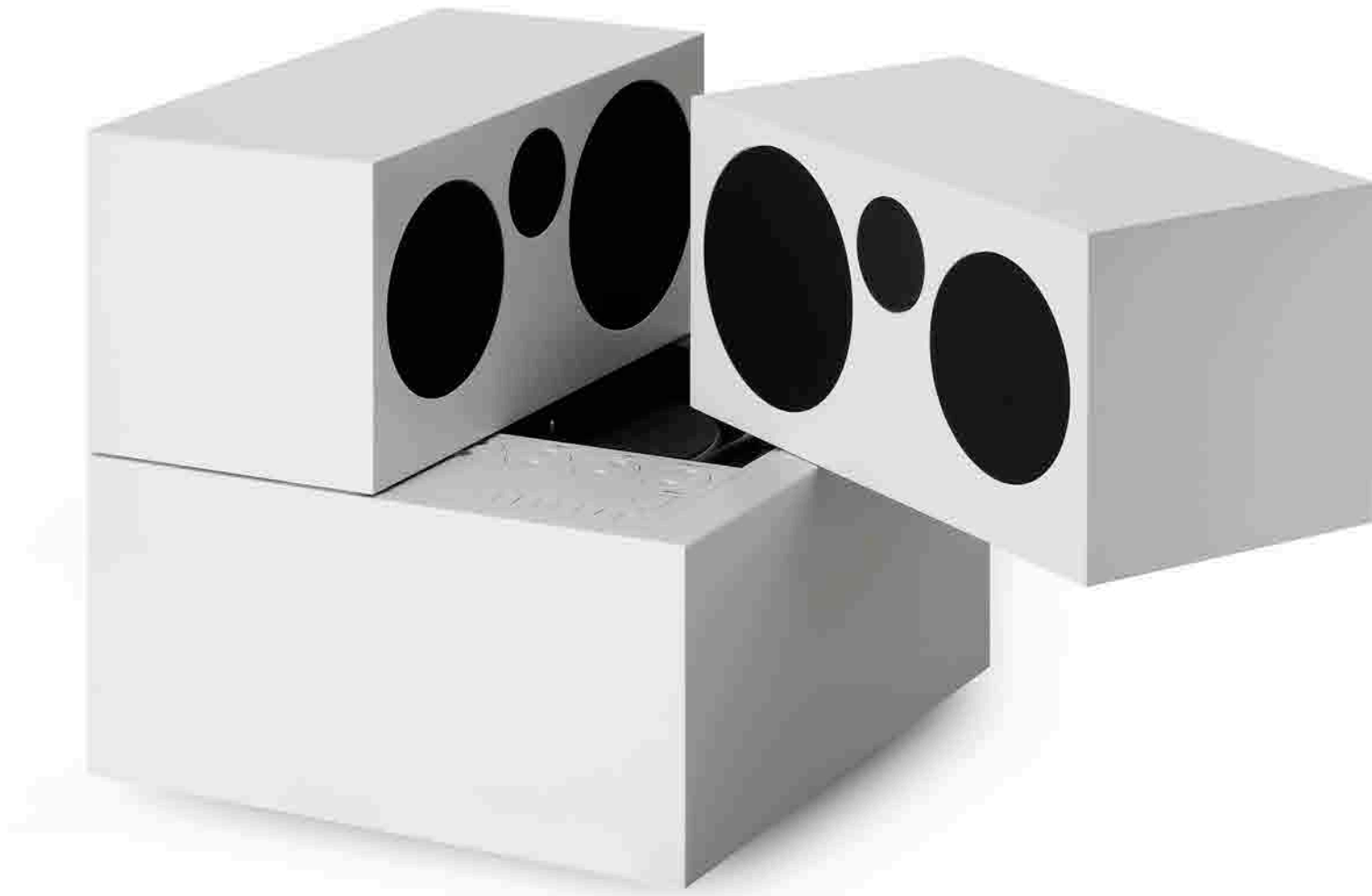
All those possible today:

From the unforgettable and still sought-after sonority immortalized in "vinyl records" (cult objects for many collectors) to the - more practical but a little more "cold" - of CDs (Compact Discs) which lie lined up in thousands in our homes.... Up to the already futuristic and now available "streaming" reception mode that allows us to connect with the entire deposit of the original "Master Files" held by the various record companies....The rebirth of Totem - which I had the pleasure and the intuition to create many years ago - now coincides with the advent of new technologies, which bring all of us, Producers, Designers and Inhabitants, lovers of music and the legacy of Italian Design, safe from the risk of a purely nostalgic reincarnation. »

-Mario Bellini

26/06/2021





2021

totem

The Totem (stereo system) with removable speakers was created by the Italian designer Mario Bellini for the Italian brand Brionvega.

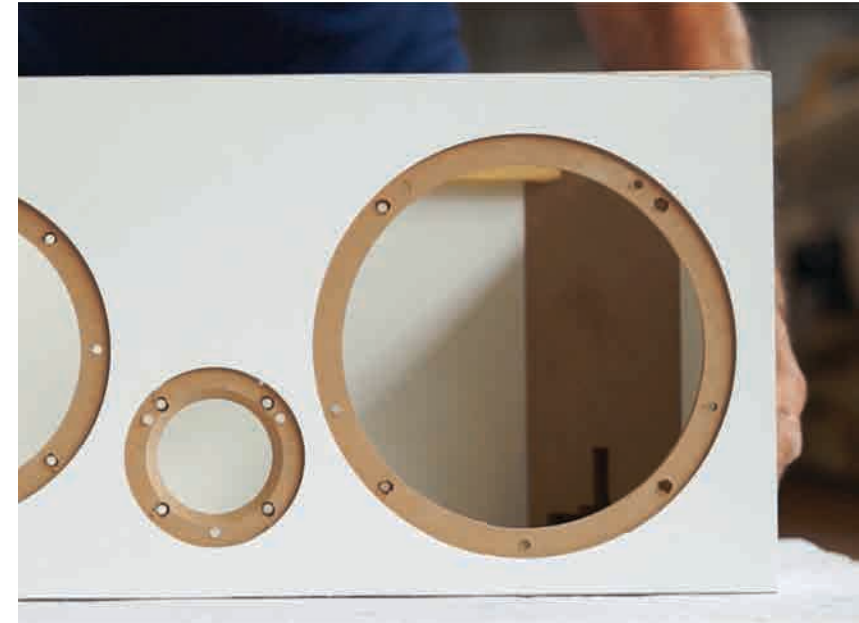
The minimalist design and auditory function appeal to those who appreciate music and work to take the listener through an experience.

When closed it is a cube, when you open its "wings" (the speakers) it becomes more than it was and allows the user to start listening.

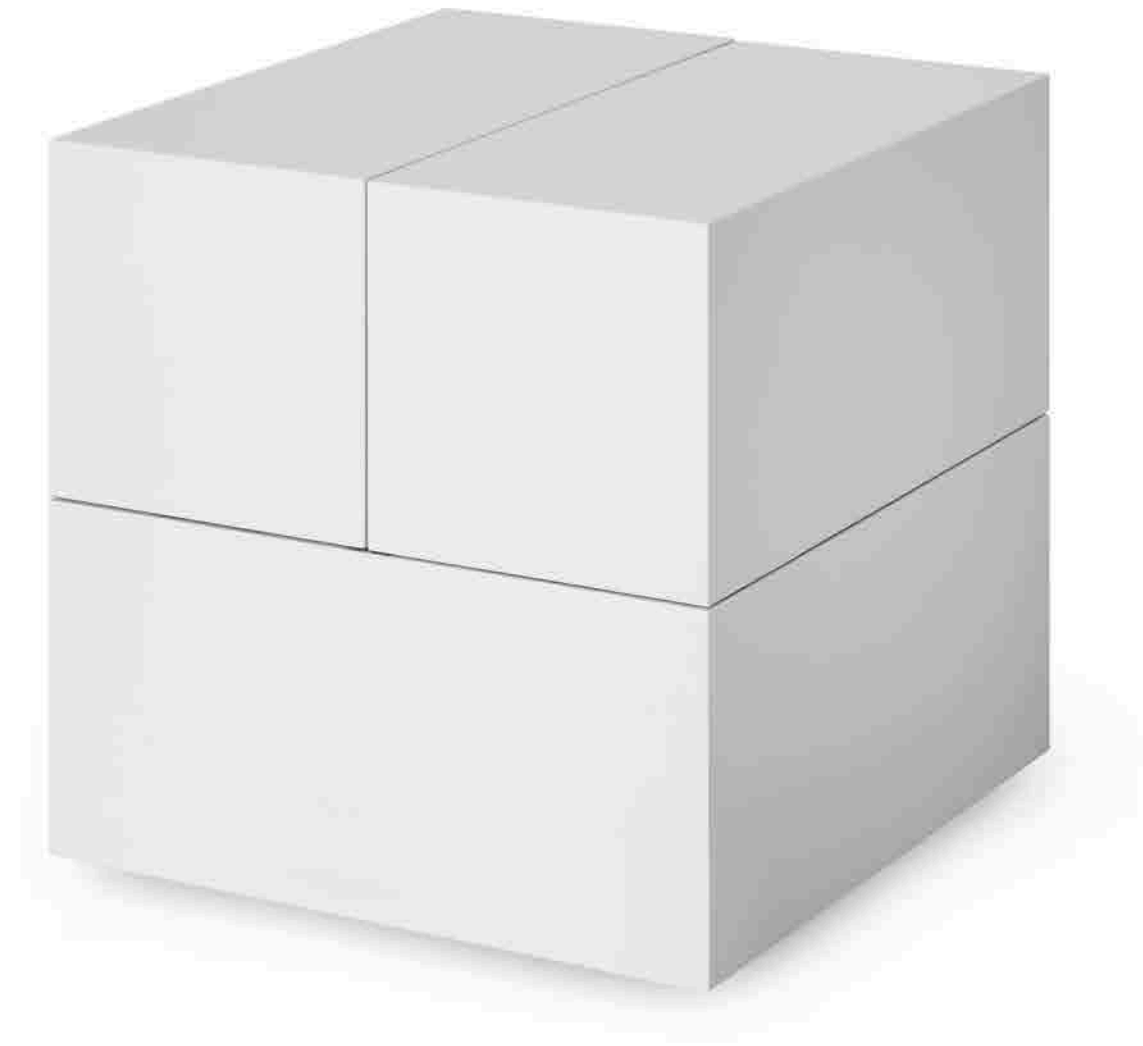
2021

totem

This piece is not just for audiophiles, but for those who have keen design tastes and are able to afford the work of visionaries.







2021

totem

When the stereo system is closed, it is a smooth cube as shown in the image. Once opened, the speakers rotate and resemble wings. This product is important for the way it combines sculpture and sound. The act of opening the cube, inserting the disc and playing the music requires the participation of the user and creates a "ritual". Overall, the product is a modern design piece and transforms a simple shape into something more.

2021

totem

Each speaker is equipped with a 2-and-a-half-way speaker system (one reflex-loading woofer, one mid-woofer and one tweeter).

Leaving the speakers in their rotating supports the distance between them is enough to guarantee excellent sound quality.

The speakers are removable, so they can also be placed in other parts of the room away from the console.

With sound power such as to cover medium and large rooms.

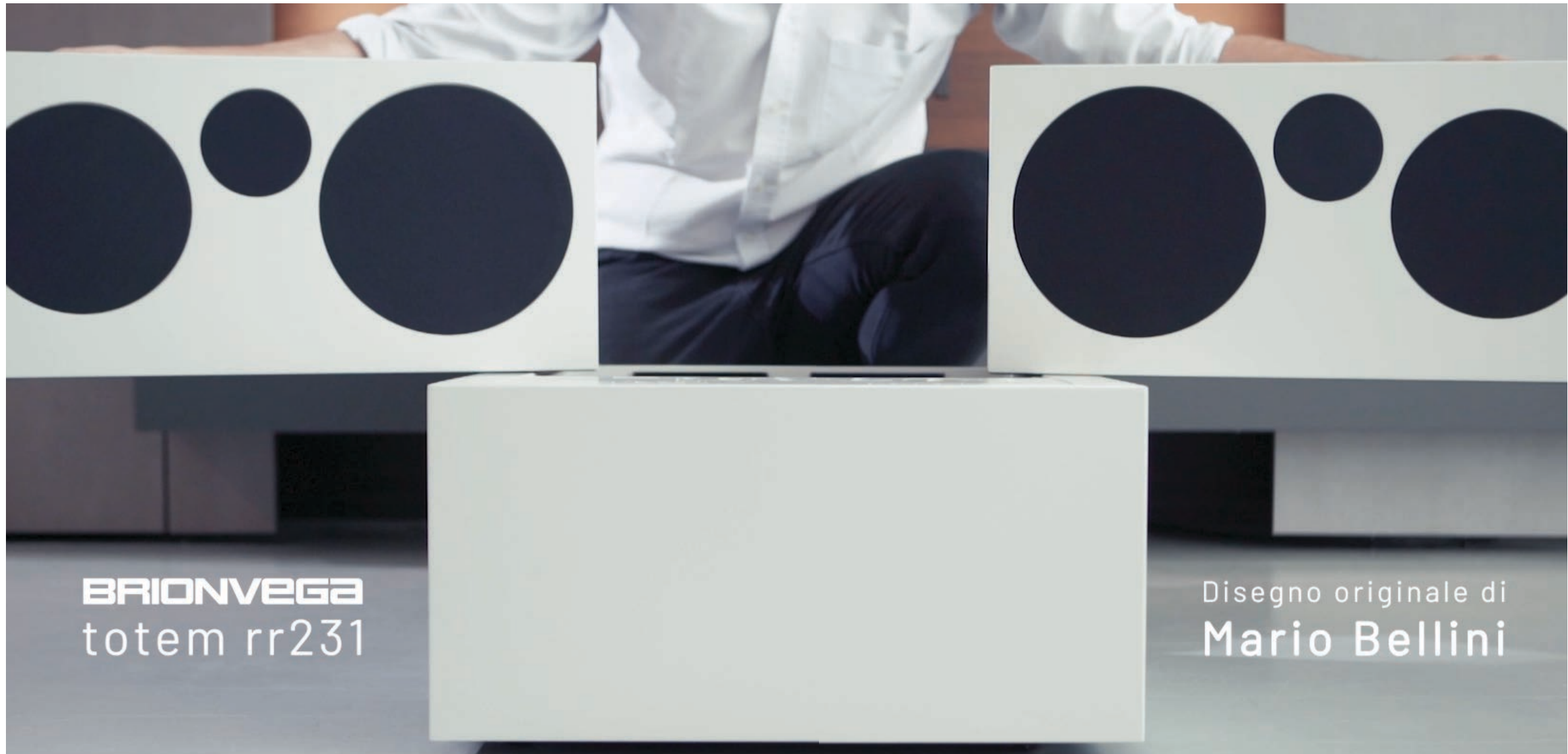




2021

totem

What sets it apart from regular turntables is the way it integrates the speaker system into its design and makes the object more of an art piece than a simple stereo system.



BRIONVEGA
totem rr231

Disegno originale di
Mario Bellini

totem

The challenge

The challenge

totem

Today, Totem BRIONVEGA represents, for us, a production challenge that, as then, combines competence, application and a maniacal passion for excellence that we carry on and cultivate with the collaboration of artisan companies located in the North East of Italy and which they share with we have the same characteristics and passions.





The challenge

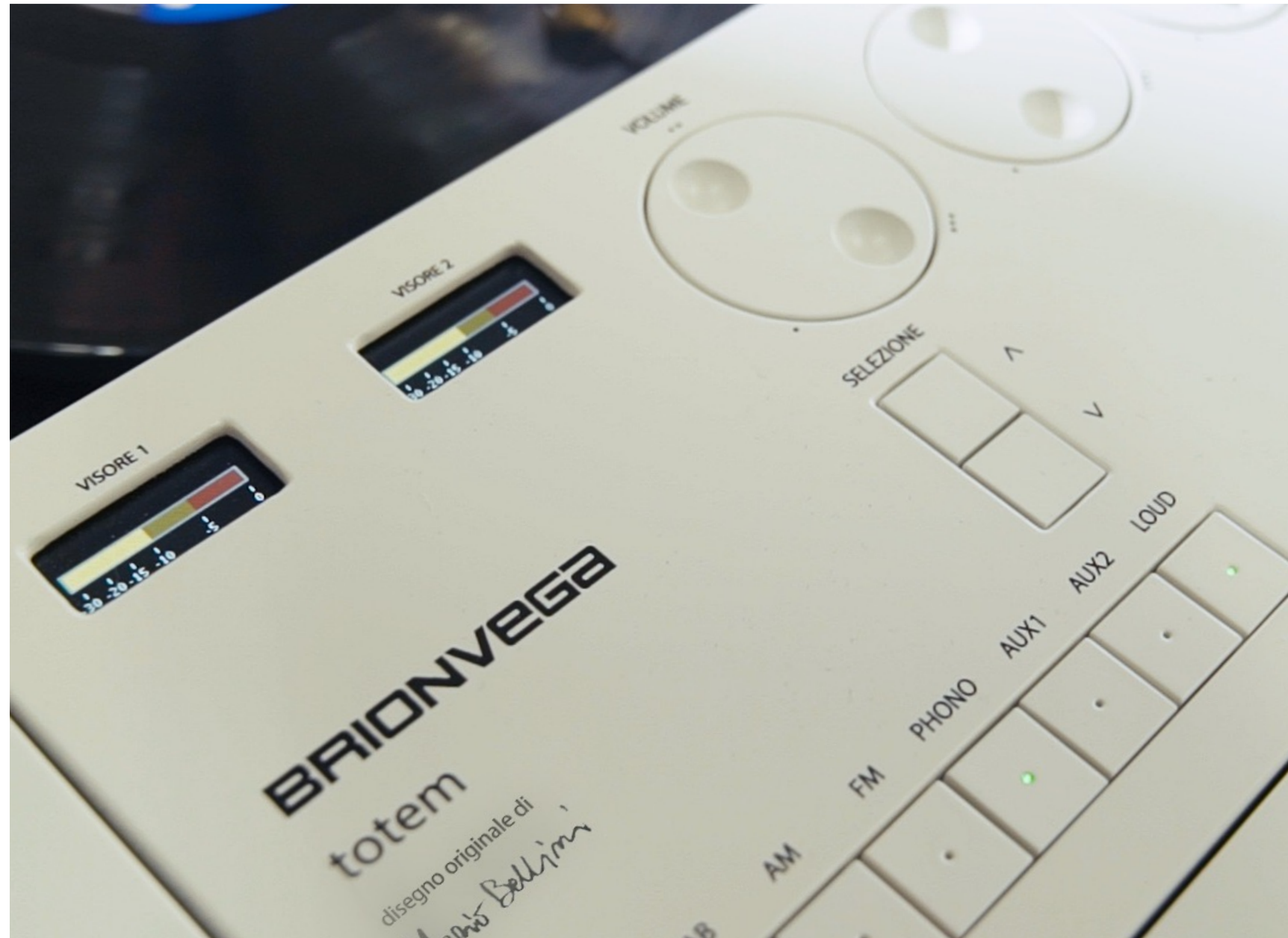
totem

Totem is a unicum: a very simple object with a perfectly cubic, sculptural shape, apparently also simple that contains complexity and solutions that only a great genius of design and a small / large company called BRIONVEGA could think of producing in 1971. A period in which in Italy, and especially in Milan, the "can't be done" was not contemplated. This typically Italian attitude combined with an extraordinary entrepreneurial ability has contributed to the creation of "Italian design", of "Italian design in Milan".

The challenge

totem

Totem cost in 1971 as a middle-class upper-class engine and unfortunately the cost and construction times were even higher and only the stubbornness and the very high craftsmanship of the workers of those times managed to produce just over 500 copies of this extraordinary "object", a large part today in the most important museums in the world in the hands of jealous collectors.





The challenge

totem

The totem today, together with the radiofonografo, represents a challenge, which the company has invested in, to show the world that there are objects developed by brilliant designers and above all made in Italy by skilled craftsmen able to be current and innovative even afterwards. 50 years and to challenge the next 50 by representing the "companion" of at least 2-3 further generations, objects to be used and handed down as an example of real INDUSTRIAL ART.



[Click here to see the video](#)

Technical Specifications

totem rr231



totem rr231

Technical specifications

- Cabinet made of MDF wood, lacquered and polished by hand
- ProJect 33/45 rpm manual turntable
- Automatic system, only for DAB
- Storage programs: - N ° in FM mode: 24 - N ° in AM mode: 8 - N ° in DAB mode: 24
- Integrated stereo amplifier 2x125W (self-limited)
- 2 RCA audio inputs for external sources
- 1 RCA audio output for connection to an external amplification system
- 1 RCA audio output for connecting an external subwoofer
- 1 6.3mm amplified jack output for listening with headphones
- 1 USB 5V output (max. 500mA)
- Dimensions (WxHxD): 52.5 x 52.5 x 52.5 cm (closed cabinet) 52.5 x 26 x 26 cm (speakers) 2 cm height from the ground
- Weight: 45.5 kg



Bibliography:

Brionvega

by Decio Giulio Riccardo Carugati
published by Mondadori Electa, 2003

Mario Bellini

Furniture, Machines & Objects

by Enrico Morteo
published by Phaidon, 2015

Photographs:

Archivio di Parma

Technical drawings and historical photographs
totem rr130

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