

When I first heard that a nonprofit organisation was opening in Milan, I thought it was (mere) folly. Although a lucrative area, the city of Milan seemed unresponsive to the support of organisations that aimed solely at artistic and cultural diffusion.

At the first inauguration of the space in 1991, *80 manifesti per Viafarini*, there was a massive participation, both festive and incredulous. As the true souls of Viafarini, the artists participated as spectators whilst their work was sold to balance the uncertain accounts of the nonprofit activity.

This folly soon became contagious and Viafarini became for me, like many others, a point of reference for the Milanese (artistic) scene which had been until then animated/enlivened by just a few private galleries.

In Viafarini during the 90's I first saw the exhibitions of the artists Pierpaolo Campanini, Gianni Caravaggio, Maggie Cardelùs and Adrian Paci, with whom I still work to this day. In addition to many young Italians, a lot of foreign artists have contributed to Viafarini's history: to name a few, the memorable exhibitions of Mona Hatoum, Tobias Rehberger and Rosemarie Trockel.

Viafarini's pioneering ability was equalled by the opening of the archives, an invaluable "~~(data-)tank~~" databank and indispensable device for those interested in entering the Italian art scene, which I had used to consult when I decided to open my own gallery.

In a country like ours, where institutions do not provide a space for young artists to take their first steps within the art world, Viafarini acts as the meeting point between artists and the public, and as the platform for young curators to experiment and make comparisons. It is one of the few avantgarde venues which I recommend that foreign curators and gallery owners visit when in Milan, with the conviction of doing Italian art a service.

-Massimo Kaufmann