

Art and architecture in conversation

A triplet of mirrors seemed to reflect into infinity, although, in fact, it was cutouts in the walls bringing the three rooms together.

This was the apartment of the architect Luca Cipelletti, its windows overlooking the high-rise skyline of what the fashion designer **ARTHUR ARBESSER** called “industrial Milan.” And the two artistic spirits were working together to display Mr. Arbesser’s designs against a collection of Modernist art.

The Austrian-born Mr. Arbesser had finished his collection of square-cut sportswear, working in straight lines and using texture to create depth. The designer, who worked for seven years with Giorgio Armani after graduating from Central St. Martins in London, was a 2013 winner of the “Who Is On Next?” competition in Italy for promising designers.

Using their artistic vision, the two men started pairing clothes with objects, and achieved some fascinating results. A geometrically patterned coat was set against a stripe design by Ettore Sottsass while a gleaming dark blue viscose jacket went along with the ceramics of Fausto Melotti. Even Mr. Cipelletti’s bathroom had fluffy knitwear the texture of bath towels.

The result was arresting and original, an excellent example of two minds bouncing off one other — and an intriguing collection as well.

Back in Milan after two seasons showing in New York, **MAX KIBARDIN** has created shoes with flowers that show what a talent this Siberian-raised designer is.

“I am always playing with flowers,” said Mr. Kibardin, although the embellishment on some of his most fairylike sandals are, in fact, made with knots in suede, giving the footwear a lightness and lushness.

Other elements of Russian romance were a high-heeled shoe with a fur cuff at the ankle or flowers like daisies in springtime sprouting over velvet shoes and handbags. Another version with roses tracing the line of the toes came in vivid red.

The designer admits that he feels more like an artist, prepared to spend



HENRIK BLOMQVIST/ARTHUR ARBESSER (ABOVE); MAX KIBARDIN (BELOW)

Left, creations by Arthur Arbesser for autumn/winter 2014 and, below, knots of suede decorate a shoe by Max Kibardin.

hours on handwork to make a boot embellished with what look like twinkling stars and mesh around the ankle.

With such a poetic imagination, the designer already has created shoes for the American designers Reem Acra and Ralph Rucci, and he is creative director of Bruno Magli. **SUZY MENKES**

