

Press Release

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STEFANO COSTABILE, ITALIAN MILLINER COMES TO MELBOURNE'S SPRING RACING CARNIVAL

[Global Association of International Artists](#) (GAIA) is proud to announce *Il Viaggio delle Dee (Goddess Voyage)*, a touring exhibition of renowned Italian milliner Stefano Costabile, which leads up to and includes Melbourne Cup Day.

Stefano, a.k.a Steven of [Steven's Hats](#), hails from the town of Cosenza in the south of Italy. His creations, which are all hand-made, are so fantastical that [Segmento](#) magazine recently dubbed him the Mad Hatter, after the character of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*.

Since founding [Steven's Hats](#) in 2006, his creations have amassed a substantial following outside of Italy, especially after winning third prize at the prestigious international competition *Amis del Capè* in Alessandria, Piedmont (see the attached).

None other than Lady Borsalino, the only surviving family member of legendary Italian hat makers the House of Borsalino, presented the award to Stefano.

In his rapid-fire *cosentino* dialect, Stefano said he received the award for a ceremonial modular-style hat that can be dismantled and reconstructed depending on the occasion, a creation both extravagant and functional.

Stefano has worked with various textiles, making personalised hats for both men and women. But for *Il Viaggio delle Dee* he was inspired by ancient Greek and Roman goddesses to create "wearable sculptures" exclusively for women and exclusively from sinamay straw.

This latest collection is absolutely born of instinct, Stefano has explained, and his hands have worked the straw as if he were playing a musical instrument. Above all, he cherishes nature as a fountain of inspiration and from this feeling for nature came visions of Goddesses who were in antiquity the personifications of natural elements like water, sun, moon, earth and also love.

Melbourne-based stylist, Lynette Pater, who has worked with *Steven's Hats* for the fashion site, [Beauty Shall Save the World](#), will take centre stage with Stefano at several of his scheduled events, including Myer's Fashion on the Field on Cup Day.

She notes that what Stefano creates are really beautiful examples of how you do not need much, other than a fabulous hat, to capture the attention of everyone in the room.

But *Il Viaggio delle Dee* is more than a showcase for an extraordinary talent. For Giovanni Butera, founding director of GAIA, this touring exhibition of Stefano's latest collection is also about making connections and sharing skills and ideas.

One of the highlights of this exhibition is an event hosted by Kangan Institute at the Westin Hotel. This event is a precursor to establishing a collaborative venture between Kangan's millinery course and Stefano's atelier in Cosenza. The venture will offer graduates an opportunity to further their artistry and experience.

And there is still more. *Il Viaggio delle Dee* is also an opportunity to promote and raise funds for GAIA's charitable works.

GAIA is a not-for-profit organisation established to create global pathways for young and disadvantaged artists to use their art in promoting social cohesion by exploring their own traditions, assumptions and beliefs within cultures that are not their own.

Stefano is graciously donating proceeds from his exhibition to developing the first stage of GAIA's international exchange program, which is aimed at attracting young and disadvantaged artists from all over the world.

Publicity materials and a schedule of events for *Il Viaggio delle Dee* are attached.

For further information or to arrange an interview with Stefano Costabile, contact Giovanni Butera on 0410 860 036 or by email giovannibutera@live.com