

FONDAZIONE FIERA MILANO 'ILLUSTRATES' THE CITY WITH THE MILANO È FIERA PHOTO EXHIBIT. A VISUAL NARRATION OF WHAT WAS THERE BEFORE THE SKYSCRAPERS

Milan, December 12, 2017 – **Giovanni Gorno Tempini**, Chairman of Fondazione Fiera Milano, inaugurated the “**Milano è Fiera**” photo exhibit today. With more than **60 photographs** divided into **8 subject areas**, the exhibit is **120 linear meters long** and is open to anyone passing along the avenues between the two Liberty-style buildings (the Palazzine degli Orafi in largo Domodossola, designed by Paul Vietti Violi in 1923) and owned by Fondazione Fiera Milano.

The photos are accompanied by quotes taken from some of the leading authors and journalists of the times, like **Giulio Nascimbeni, Orio Vergani, Vincenzo Cardarelli, Giovannino Guareschi, Dino Buzzati, and Laura Curino**, who wrote or **spoke about the Fair** and the shows held there and the relationship between Milan and the events that took place in and around the pavilions.

Many public figures also lent their voices, including **Presidents of the Republic**, prime ministers, politicians, diplomats, cardinals who later became **Popes**, cultural and entertainment celebrities who, either as public officials or private individuals, traveled the avenues of the Fiera, often as passengers in the 1948 Fiat Torpedo 2800 that Fondazione still uses for official events.

Milano è Fiera is a “photographic journey” created by Fondazione Fiera Milano to offer a look back to those who find themselves walking along the avenues where -- for nearly 90 years, some of the leading exhibitions in the world were held -- what was there before the arrival of the ultra-modern CityLife complexes.

Milano è Fiera is dedicated to those who, perhaps, might even have visited the Fiera Campionaria every year, as well as to those who have never set foot on its streets or inside its pavilions, perhaps put off by that enclosure that separated it from “its” City. Because, if it’s true that the Fiera is part of Milan, it is just as true that Milan is the city of the Fiera. And even today, now that a good portion of the exhibition facility has moved to the Northwest part of the City, the bond remains for all time.

The Fiera enclosure, however, “opened up” to the City on more than on one occasion. For example, in

1946 (with **La Scala Theater** out of use due to damage from bombings) when Arturo Toscanini decided to make the Fiera its temporary home. And the **RAI** [Italian radio and TV], with its famous “Fiera studios”, produced some of its most popular and successful broadcasts, like *Rischiatutto*, *la Domenica Sportiva* and *Portobello*.

More recently, with Fondazione Fiera Milano’s participation on the Expo 2015 Organizing Committee and later, *Arexpo*, to bring the Universal Expo to Milan and then manage its added-value assets after the event.

The show is divided into **8 sections**, each one independent of the others, that illustrate the factors that influenced the development of Fiera di Milano, a place where curiosity drives discovery and excitement. In the introduction to the 8 sections, there is a brief explanation of the show’s title, a panel dedicated to the *Palazzine degli Orafi* and a panel about the historic 1923 gate (now, completely restored). Composed of three separate sections, it was designed by the Italian master of the Liberty style, *Alessandro Mazzucotelli*, and has always stood guard at the entrance to *Largo Domodossola*.

This Fondazione Fiera Milano exhibit aims to call attention to the relationship that, for nearly a century, has tied the Fiera to our City; a well-established relationship that ensured this City would become one of the most-visited destinations by people from every continent. Today this area contains only a few, essential reminders of its past: *Pavilion 3* in *Piazza VI Febbraio* and the two Liberty buildings, true architectural jewels from the 1920s. The millions of visitors who came here to the Fiera each year no longer walk its avenues, but the thousands of occupants and businesses in the new district do come, and others will come to visit them. This journey is dedicated to them, so they can see what used to be here and the key role the Fiera played – and continues to play, though in another location – for Milan, the Lombardy region and the entire national economic system. You can also submit your own personal memories of the Fiera di Milano to archivistorico@fondazionefiera.it

SECTIONS OF THE EXHIBIT

THE PLACE where Milan is designed - From the barracks of the refugees of the First World War on the *Bastioni* of *Porta Venezia*, to the area of the former *piazza d’Armi* di Milano, then expanding outward to include the *Portello* and concluding with the architectural park of *FieraMilano Rho*.

Indeed, the Fiera has moved around a lot in its nearly 100-year history, causing a clamor over what were often considered its risky choices. Which turned out to be real winners.

HERE, genius is on display - The Fiera di Milano has consistently been a challenging school for Italian architects and designers. Each year there were numerous pavilions, installations and panels, all designed by celebrated architects. Above all, following WWII, major Italian companies in different fields of production – from iron and steel manufacturing to industrial machinery, and chemicals to telecommunications – turned to A-list architects of the caliber of Franco Albini, Luciano Baldessari, Erberto Carboni, the Castiglioni brothers, Enzo Mari, Bruno Munari and many others, to design their exhibits at the Campionaria.

WHERE design is at home - the Fiera di Milano debuts as the global showcase for all things Made in Italy. A place where supply and demand come together, where you can witness the progress of technology in every branch of industry and within the same production chain, from semi-finished to end products. Exhibiting at the Fiera is the final moment in a very long process. The 15 days of the Campionaria were those in which the exhibitor – from the industrial giant to the smallest family business – could show off examples of its handiwork. Nowadays, specialized shows draw the global innovations of all industries, packing them into just a few days.

BRING ON those winning innovations - the Fiera as a permanent platform for innovation: countless products were unveiled; some were real true blockbusters that influenced the course of history. Over the years, the Fiera has launched products that were designed for consumers, but also major innovations in the area of manufacturing and technological breakthroughs that took industrial production to new heights.

INSIDE a network of connections - the word Fiera derives from the Latin feria: that which is part of a “holiday or vacation”. Holidays have long been the ideal occasion, not only for celebrations, but also for holding large markets, similar to exhibitions, that might last for several days, and where doing business was key. Having a duration of several days and conducting business are characteristics that trade fairs still feature today. They are a prime location for the exchange of goods and products and for developing inter-personal relations. A “culture of exchange” prevails at the Fair.

AROUND the heart of Milan - Milan’s Fiera is not just a fair for Milan. Over the years, it has expanded beyond the gates of the fairgrounds, building solid, valuable relationships with the great Italian institutions. With La Scala, which the Fiera hosted in 1946 while the historic theater in the city center was being renovated to repair damage from bombing during WWII. And, with the RAI [Italian Radio and TV], which first broadcast from the Fiera as an experiment and also produced some programs there that remain in the annals of TV (including Rischiatutto, la Domenica Sportiva, Portobello). With the Expo 2015 Organizing committee and Arexpo, to bring the Expo to Milan and then manage its added-value assets

after the event.

BEYOND all time – the Fiera never shows its age. It was launched as a bold adventure, some would say heroic, by a small group of people. It brought the world to Milan with the Fiera Campionaria, which became the elite showcase of Made in Italy products. Times change and so does the Fiera. It continues its journey in the direction of specialized shows, with a nod to internationalization. Trade shows and conventions mushroom and the Fiera gears up to cope with its own expansion. First at Portello and, in the early 2000s, at Rho-Pero.

AT THE CENTER of an international stage – the Fiera is not only the foremost showcase for businesses, the place you come to see, touch, feel and learn about technological progress. It is also a stage where celebrities of all kinds stand before the crowd. The trademark inauguration of the Milanese Fair, with the ceremony for raising the flags of all the countries officially present at the Fiera Campionaria, was always accompanied by a visit from the President of the Republic of Italy. In broader terms, hundreds of official visits have left their mark and can be found in the Historical Archives. The more preeminent personalities were accompanied along the avenues in an iconic automobile that Fondazione still uses today: a Fiat Torpedo 2800.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SHOW

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Fondazione Fiera Milano, External Relations and Communications Area and Historical Archives

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Fondazione Fiera Milano Historical Archives

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