

INTESA SANPAOLO: URBAN WOOD IN THE INNER COURTYARD OF THE GALLERIE D'ITALIA IN PIAZZA SAN CARLO

The “Urban Woods - The Art of Biodiversity” project kicks off in collaboration with Aboca and the Turin International Book Fair on Friday 6 September

Turin, 5 September 2024 - Intesa Sanpaolo is transforming the inner courtyard of its museum in Turin, the Gallerie d'Italia in Piazza San Carlo, into an authentic urban “wood”: **from Friday 6 September** visitors, enthusiasts and students will be able to attend meetings, presentations and outdoor workshops in a space designed to promote nature and wellbeing. The initiative forms part of the “**Urban Woods - The Art of Biodiversity**” project, born from a collaboration with Aboca, leading benefit company in the field of natural and biodegradable therapeutic health products, and the Turin International Book Fair, the most important Italian event dedicated to literature and reading, of which the bank has been a partner for many years.

“We have enriched the spaces of the Gallerie d'Italia with a place dedicated to health and beauty that is open to everyone in one of the city's main squares. The urban wood is consistent with the photography exhibition on the climate crisis, the safeguarding of the planet and the fragility and beauty of nature. An experiential space dedicated to our public, to students and enthusiasts, which reiterates Intesa Sanpaolo's unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability issues,” remarks **Michele Coppola, Executive Director for Art, Culture and Historical Heritage at Intesa Sanpaolo and General Manager of Gallerie d'Italia.**

“We are delighted to collaborate with Intesa Sanpaolo to bring biodiversity to Turin, a city with which we already have strong ties thanks to the success our publishing house has enjoyed in recent years at the Book Fair with the Writers' Wood initiative. We have reproduced this same wood, which creates its own microclimate, for Gallerie d'Italia to celebrate the art of biodiversity. It is a great opportunity to reflect more closely on the relationship between human beings and the environment and to bring a bit of nature to the places where it is most needed,” comments **Massimo Mercati, CEO of Aboca.**

After the great success of the Writers' Wood project launched at the 2022 Book Fair, the Gallerie d'Italia “Urban Wood” consists of twelve imposing trees, up to six metres tall and of different species - including an olive tree, a birch, a holm oak and a eucalyptus - which can be accessed by visitors and anyone else who feels the need to find a green oasis in the centre of the city that combines art, health and nature, like a green extension of Piazza San Carlo.

The urban wood of Palazzo Turinetti encourages visitors to reflect on the topics that have in recent months inspired the photographic works dedicated to the climate crisis, the

safeguarding of the planet and our relationship with nature, in keeping with the identity of a contemporary museum which, thanks to the evidence of the images, speaks accurately about the present and the issues that humanity is facing.

The layout of the garden is based on a museum space concept developed by architect Michele De Lucchi, where the half-light of the underground levels, which encourage visitors to reflect on the photographs on display and the challenges of the contemporary world, is offset by the brilliant courtyard, transformed into a public pedestrian walkway that passes between two green spaces to link Piazza San Carlo with Via XX Settembre. Ambient music and relaxing lighting contribute to making the wood an area of wellness and beauty open to the city, with a technological system for monitoring plant health and the needs of each individual species.

The new green area of the Gallerie d'Italia - Turin is further proof of Intesa Sanpaolo's strategic approach to environmental, economic and social sustainability, an area in which the Bank has established itself as a global leader thanks to its support for the ecological transition, its Net Zero objective, its projects for the protection of natural capital, and its dissemination of virtuous processes and behaviours to safeguard the planet. A commitment described, since May 2022, at the "La fragile meraviglia" exhibition by Paolo Pellegrin, in the circular economy stories of Luca Locatelli, in the photos dedicated to water by the Cesura collective and in the spectacular images of the oceans by Cristina Mittermeier. A story that will continue, from October 2024, with "American Nature" by Mitch Epstein, our next photographic project which, together with the urban wood, will create evocative new dialogues.

Finally, Urban Woods is enriched by the creativity of artist XEL, who has created a site-specific work inside the museum for the occasion. XEL has recently addressed the issue of nature reclaiming its spaces by adding reassuring portions of greenery that grow within his urban landscapes, seeking to create a balance with the places of the present. His work for Gallerie d'Italia forms part of this research project, in perfect harmony with the wood in Piazza San Carlo.

The museum in Turin, together with those in Milan, Naples and Vicenza, is part of Intesa Sanpaolo's Gallerie d'Italia museum project led by Michele Coppola, the Bank's Executive Director of Art, Culture and Historical Heritage.